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LOSING THE CHILDREN.

BY I. E. DIEKENGA.

The children are growing, yes, day by day,
The children are growing so fast,
There soon will be none of them left to play,
When childhood's sweet time is past.
But while it is going I love to feel
The touch of each delicate hand;
The little arms round me that gently steal
Are softer than silken bands.

Oh, yes! I am losing them one by one,
As vanishing years pass by:
Time robs me as surely as Death, and none
Away from his grasp can fly.
Then I will be kind to the little group
That gather around my knee,
That when they are old in their hearts a troop
Of memories fond may be.

God placed them with me in their day of youth,
And I would be false to Him
If I left in their spirits a sign of ruth
Or a shadow their lives to dim.
I will train them and teach them to love the light,
And ever their duty to do;
That when they are old they may live aright,
And be honest and brave and true.

From Out the Storm.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "DICK'S SWEETHEART," ETC.

CHAPTER V.

LORD WRIOTHESLEY had elected to walk from the station to his old home, which was but a mile or so from the village. He had to pass through a glorious stretch of woodland and meadow full to overflowing with sweet memories of the old days. Each step he took awoke in him a strange sense of the unreality of the present, of the undying vitality of the past.

As he came within view of the house, and whilst he was yet a long way from it, he saw the tall shaggy deerhound that had been but a pup when he left stalk leisurely through the open hall door, and stand looking meditatively southward, to where the ocean lay.

He was evidently waiting for some one, and presently, as if tired of his inactivity, he planted his fore-feet firmly on the upper step, and, drawing himself backwards, relieved his feelings by a vigorous shake.

A moment later a tall, slight figure joined the dog, and, stooping, patted it fondly. The deerhound rose in answer to the loving greeting, and placed its huge paws upon the girl's shoulders.

Wriothesley could see it all as he approached through the shrubberies—the girlish form clothed in white, with the great dog standing upright, gazing rapturously into her face and wagging his tail. The shrubbery then became more dense, and he lost sight of the perfect picture; when he emerged into the open again, he found that he was very close to the house. The girl was still there, however, and the dog was crouching at her feet. Wriothesley gazed at her intently.

Could that be Marvel—the child he had left? How altogether changed, if she indeed it was! And what was it in her face that reminded him of—of whom? He could not remember.

At that moment Marvel caught sight of him; their eyes met, and first she paled, and then a sudden lovely crimson suffused her cheeks; then, with a faint, glad cry, she sprang down the steps and threw her arms around his neck.

"It is you! You have come at last! Oh, Fulke—oh, dear, dear, Fulke!"

She kissed him without a touch of bashfulness. Why should she be shy with him? Was he not her brother?

"And to think," she went on presently, with a little tearful laugh, "that for quite a minute I did not know you! Oh, that was horrid of me? But come in—come at once! Aunty will be so glad—so happy!"

"One moment," entreated Wriothesley, holding her gently by both arms and looking at her—this girl who had kissed him so frankly, and now stood smiling straight into his eyes without a suspicion of embarrassment.

Verily she was a revelation!

"So you are Marvel?" he said at length, in a tone so full of unfeigned amazement that she fairly bubbled over with mirth and gladness.

"I really believe you didn't know me either," she said. "Yes; haven't I grown? Aunty says she will put a weight on my head if I don't stop; and I'm only just seventeen, too! But don't let us stop talking here. Come in to auntie—she has been longing for you, oh, so much!"

She slipped her hand into his and dragged him eagerly up the steps and into the grand old hall, through the dim beauty of which she hurried him, each moment her light steps growing swifter, until at last she began to run.

Her excitement communicating itself to Wriothesley, he, too, found himself running presently up the broad oaken staircase and along the corridors. All the time he was tormented by a desire to know who it was that Marvel so much resembled. Where lay the resemblance? Was it in her eyes, her hair, or her mouth?

When they drew near the end of the corridor that led to Lady Mary's rooms—he rather the worse for his rapid movement, she fresh as a young fawn—as though she could no longer restrain her joyful news, she began to call aloud:

"I have found him, auntie! It is Fulke indeed! He is coming! I am bringing him to you!"

Thus announced, and laughing gaily at her childish enthusiasm, he was ushered into his aunt's presence.

Lady Mary was lying back in a large arm-chair, and he went to her quickly. He was thankful indeed that nothing had had power to keep him from her, when he gazed into her eyes, and saw that she was so frail, so ethereal, so close to the borderland. A lovely smile was upon her lips, but it was a smile that awed him. He realized then how weak was the body that kept her soul from heaven.

"My darling—my own boy!" she whispered, pressing his hand against her bosom, and passing her fingers lingeringly and lovingly through his short locks, while two large tears rolled down her cheeks.

"I was so afraid I should not be able to wait to see you," she said—"it was such a long time!"

After a little while, however, the old cheerfulness that had ever characterized her came back; and, having kissed him again, she pushed him playfully from her.

"And now stand up, Wriothesley," she said, "and let me see how my boy looks now that he is a man."

Wriothesley stood up before her, and, with an affectation of showing himself off to the best advantage, folded his arms across his chest, and drew himself up to his full height, which was not less than six feet.

Lady Mary regarded with delight the tall, bronzed, handsome soldier before her, but her nephew himself felt that he was growing momentarily uneasy beneath the steady gaze of two luminous eyes that did not belong to Lady Mary. The tall young girl—this strange new Marvel—was staring at him openly and innocently.

"Auntie," said she suddenly, "how very brown he is!"

"My dear," replied Lady Mary, in the precise tone elderly ladies generally adopt towards little girls of twelve, "it is not in good taste to speak to one person of another when that other happens to be present."

"I know. I should have remembered," said Marvel contritely.

Then she corrected her breach of etiquette by looking sweetly at Wriothesley, and saying to him, "You are extremely brown."

"Well," rejoined Lady Mary pleasantly, "what would you have, you silly child? The sun of India would not hide its face to please you and me."

"You quite misunderstand. I didn't want it to do so," said Marvel, arching her brows. "I like him—that is—I like you, Fulke, brown, like that. But what I wonder at and what I find fault with is that his neck, below his collar, is white. That spoils the effect. Why didn't you make yourself brown all over, Fulke?"

This was embarrassing, but both Lady Mary and Wriothesley, after a moment's pause, laughed unrestrainedly; and Marvel laughed with them, though it was very evident that she did not know why.

"I suppose it would have been too much trouble," she said, in a tone of one searching after truth.

"Yes," said Wriothesley; "that and one or two other absurd reasons hardly worth mentioning."

Then he turned to Lady Mary and said:

"Don't imagine I haven't taken your lessons to heart; but I must speak to you of Marvel, although she is present. How she has changed—how different in every way!"

"Yes; she persuaded me to let her put up her hair last month," returned Lady Mary, with a rather troubled air, as she looked at Marvel. "That has made such a difference. And such a child as she is—it was too soon, I think!"

"But seventeen, auntie, and so tall as I am! You know I told you how Miss Netterville laughed about it to her sister that Sunday. I heard the word 'tall' distinctly. You wouldn't like to hear your hair called a tail, Fulke, would you? And then, auntie, you remember what the Rector said?"

"Yes, yes," interrupted Lady Mary; "we all know that what you say the Rector says. But, for my own part, I think it absurd for a little girl like you to ape the habits of grown-up people."

Wriothesley listened to the discussion with amazement and amusement. It was plain to him that Lady Mary still regarded Marvel as quite a child—the child she had taken to her heart so many years before, and reared and loved, and that Marvel herself had not yet awakened to the fact that she was already passing from girlhood to womanhood. It all arose, no doubt, from the isolated life she had led, with only the loving companionship of one old woman and one old man to fill her days.

There was some curiosity in the gaze he now turned upon Marvel; and, as he looked, he told himself that she was inexpressibly lovely, with the calm serenity on lip and brow that spoke of innocence and peace. The sight did not touch him as it might have done had his heart been cleansed of the wild passion that was swiftly consuming it.

He understood vaguely the purity that filled his home—the old woman making joyful preparation for the life beyond the grave, the young girl standing upon the threshold of this life, ignorant of evil, with large calm eyes, soft with trust and dulled with no sense of suspicion; yet, after the first joy at meeting again the dear good soul who had been more than mother to him had subsided, a feeling of impatience grew upon Wriothesley, and a longing to get back to the woman who held his heart in a cool, calculating grasp.

His promise to return to her kept him in good spirits. He got through his day and evening in the old home very creditably; but above the gentle babble of those two who had so longed for his return, he heard that other low, seductive voice, and almost felt the touch of the soft, clinging fingers.

He made an excuse the next morning, ran up to town, and arrived at Mrs. Scarlett's house in Park Lane only to find her surrounded by a fashionable crowd. She was, in fact, "At home," and he managed to get only a word or two from her, a glance, and a faint pressure from her hand. He returned to the Towers disappointed, yet in a degree satisfied in that he had at least seen her, and that her eyes had looked kindly into his.

After that visit he gave himself up for a whole week to the home-life. He told himself he liked it; and he grew dreamy, idle, taking no notice of how the days went—one was so like the other, indeed, in that still, calm household, that he found a difficulty in detaching the quiet events of one day from those of another.

On the seventh day Lady Mary sent him a message to say that she would be glad to see him in her own room after luncheon, a meal she rarely attended.

When he obeyed her summons, he was surprised to find her alone, which was a most unusual thing, for Marvel was almost always in attendance upon her.

"I want to speak to you," she said, when he had seated himself beside her. "Don't be frightened—it is only a word or two I have to say, and it has nothing to do with that hateful subject, business. It is something, nevertheless, that lies heavily on my mind—the fear that my poor child will have great cause to miss me when I go."

"You mean——" he put in gravely.

"That I would have you promise to befriend her. I know your heart, Fulke—there is none better in all the world; but young men, my darling"—here she laid her pretty withered hand on his apologetically—"are sometimes careless, and you might not think always. But, if you will give me your word to protect and cherish her, I shall know she will have no cause for fear when I am gone."

"Why should you talk like this?" he said. "There may yet be many days before you."

"Not many. It is this troublesome heart of mine that warns me," said she, putting her hand to it with a faint smile. "It is tired, fairly worn out; it fain would be at rest. It has found the day too long already; it is weary of sounding out the hours. Very gladly would it run down; and, indeed, I feel the final tick is at hand. We grow impatient for the calm of final sleep, my heart and I. But Marvel—how will it be with her when that hour comes? There is only you, Fulke. You will accept this trust? You will be true to her?"

"Any request of yours, believe me, would be sacred in my eyes," he answered earnestly. "But, even had you not spoken, I should have been faithful to the little friend of my boyhood. Rest assured, Marvel shall always be as a sister to me."

"She is a sweet girl with a very lovely nature," said the old lady dreamily. "Enveloped in mystery as is her birth, I should, nevertheless, look upon the man that wins her as a very fortunate individual. That night—that storm—how it all comes back to me to-day—the charming tearful face, the cry of rapture when she saw us, and the discovery of that locket! You remember it, Fulke? She wears it round her neck always. I have a foolish, romantic fancy that some day it will be means of proving her parentage."

"But have you never feared," said Wriothesley, in a low tone, "that such proving might be only to her sorrow?"

"Nay," answered Lady Mary mournfully, "I would not willingly think that;

and, at the same time, I would not incur the responsibility of bidding her destroy it. Heaven grant that it bring no evil to her! She is too young, too sweet for sore grief; yet I confess that at times my heart is heavy for her."

"Do you know," said Wriothesley, smiling brightly, with a view to dispel such gloomy thoughts, "you make me feel a little jealous of your Marvel? All your thoughts seem given to her. Is there not even one for me?"

"Thought, dear child, but no fear; there lies the difference between you. As a boy you were honest, true, kind-hearted; why should I fear for the man? And, as for this world's good, one need wish you no more than you have. There is therefore nothing to dread for you save perhaps life's disappointments that no man may elude—the failing of a friendship, the waking from a dream or two, the loss of earthly love."

Wriothesley dropped her hand abruptly, and rose to his feet. In spite of himself, he felt a superstitious fear creep over him—a belief that there was something prophetic about her last words, although he knew that she had not meant them to be taken in that sense.

"Oh, not that!" he cried to himself. "Wealth, fame—anything but that!"

He went over to the window and pressed his brow against the cool glass. In an instant he awoke from the lethargy that had bound him to the monotony of this quiet country life for seven long days. What an interminable time it seemed since last he had seen her! Seven days only, yet what an aeon it seemed! Well, he would not add to it; he would see her again—now—at once—to-day.

A mad desire to start that very moment took possession of him; he felt stifled down there in that pure, dull, exquisite country; where she was, there only was life. He turned hurriedly to Lady Mary, who was leaning back in her chair, looking pale and exhausted, and with her eyes fixed thoughtfully upon her nephew.

"I shall have to run up to town this evening," he said. "The next train leaves at six, I think."

"So soon, dear? And must you go again? It seems to me as though I had only just found you—and now to lose you again!"

"But not six years this time," he answered, endeavoring to speak lightly—"for a few hours only. If I do not return to-night, I shall certainly be here in the morning."

"The morning!" She looked at him wistfully. "I would you could have stayed with me," she said.

Her reproach was so gentle, her whole presence so frail, that remorse seized him. By an effort he conquered himself so far as to tell her that if she so willed it he would put off his going until the morrow. Always sweetly unselfish, she even now at the last denied herself; she would not, she said, have him disarrange his plans for the vagaries of an old woman; and, easily persuaded, he left her.

CHAPTER VI.

IT was about half-past ten when Lord Wriothesley drove up to the door of the house in Park Lane. He sprang from the hansom and knocked impatiently at the door.

"Mrs. Scarlett at home?" It was past the bounds of all probability that she should be in the height of the season. Yet, in a vague unreasoning way, he felt sure he should find her there; and he was not at all surprised at the servant's answer—

"Yes, my lord."

The man spoke with a certain amount of hesitation, and as if there was more to add, but Wriothesley took no notice of this.

"Upstairs," he asked, "in the morning-room?"

"Yes, my lord. But——"

Wriothesley motioned to him to stand aside.

"You needn't announce me," he said; and, before the man could remonstrate or explain, he was half-way up the staircase.

He opened the door of the pretty room that the lady of the house so much affected, and entered.

Mrs. Scarlett was half sitting, half reclining upon a crimson lounge, and beside her—very close to her—on a low chair, sat the Duke of Dawtry.

A sudden chill fell upon Wriothesley, although there was really no reason for it. Why should not the Duke make an evening call upon Mrs. Scarlett? Why should she not receive him? It was a simple—a very ordinary matter, and yet——

He advanced into the room with a more careful step than that with which he had run up-stairs, and his face, in spite of himself, looked grave.

Mrs. Scarlett made a clever little movement that brought her into a more studied attitude, and a swift change of expression passed across her face. Was it surprise or annoyance? Wriothesley could not decide which, it came and went so suddenly.

"You!" she said sweetly, holding out to him a hand decked with jewels.

The two men saluted each other with cold courtesy. It was impossible not to see the Duke's evident irritation at the interruption, even through the veneer of his well-bred courtesy, and Wriothesley barely suppressed a frown. It was altogether an unpleasant moment, but it passed, and they were soon conversing as amicably as though no unpleasant feelings filled their breasts.

In a very short time the Duke rose and made his adieux, lingering a little over Mrs. Scarlett's hand as he did so, and Wriothesley could not avoid hearing that a few words passed between them; then the door closed on the elder man, and the coast so far was clear.

A rather prolonged silence followed his Grace's exit—a silence that Wriothesley made no effort to break. A sense of unreality was oppressing him, and his heart seemed as though it was on fire. A few moments before he had succeeded in persuading himself that the Duke's presence in that room was quite orthodox; but he was now tormented by the question, Why had the old man been there—alone with her?

While driving to her through the lighted streets he had felt positively certain that he should find her at home; yet now there seemed to him something sinister in the fact that he was correct in his assumption. That she, who so courted society and was so courted by it, should deliberately elect to set aside all invitations for this evening was strange indeed.

He flushed crimson, and turned towards her abruptly, to find her gazing at him intently. As their eyes met, her whole expression altered, and her pretty, sweet, fleeting smile parted her lips.

"That you should have come here like this," she said—"without a word, a line! What a boy you are! Come nearer"—holding out to him a slim white hand—"and tell me how you knew I should be at home to-night."

"I knew nothing. I came here on the merest chance of finding you."

"Well, you were gratified?"

"Hardly."

"What you wanted more than that? Was not I alone then sufficient for you?"

"You alone—yes," he answered slowly.

She laughed and leaned back amongst her cushions, the soft light from one of the rose-shaded lamps falling upon her face.

"Is that it?" she said. "So you would isolate me! A little selfish, isn't it? And, as for that poor old Duke, you flatter him indeed when you condescend to be jealous of him. He is very prosy, I grant you; but he so likes a gossip with a pretty woman who is good enough not to show she is bored that, when he called by chance, like yourself, to-night, I had not the heart to deny myself to him; though my Indian friends will lose a letter or two by it. You see I am not so selfish as you are."

She said all this very artlessly, and smiled again. She had slipped her hand into his whilst speaking, and now, as if unconsciously, she tightened her fingers round his, softly, bewitchingly. He turned towards her, the angry light in his eyes slowly fading; he was relenting, he was almost won. Another effort, and he would be hers again.

"A word," she said, in a gay little whisper, leaning towards him—"you won't betray me? Well, I am not so unselfish perhaps as I would show myself. That old man is useful to me in many small ways; it may be that fact which enables me to endure his prosings with the fortitude I do."

"It is nothing more than that?" asked Wriothesley. "You swear to me it is only that?"

"By what shall I swear? By my troth, or my haildame, whatever that may be? Dear Wriothesley, I am afraid the little *ingenue* has been teaching you naughty ways."

He knelt down beside her and pressed her hand to his lips.

"My beloved," he said, "tell me again that the Duke of Dawtry is nothing to you!"

"Pouf—less than nothing! A summer wind could scatter my regard for him—so!"—making a dainty pretense of blowing something away from the tips of her fingers. "Fossils, I would have you know, however priceless, are not much in my line. I think"—with a reproachful glance at him—"you might have known that. They do not commend themselves to me; they fail to enchant my fancy."

"Your fancy? That is a thing light as air. Oh, that I might enchant it!"

"Why, so you do!" said she, dropping her voice to a soft undertone. "Do you think I would let another kneel where you are kneeling now? Is it a small privilege, think you, to be allowed to——"

She bent her head, and Wriothesley's lips met hers in a passionate embrace.

"That little girl has not won you from me then," she went on, in a wooing whisper. "You are still mine?"

"Now as ever."

"It is a love worth having," she said, as if to herself. Then, after a few minutes' silent thought, she added: "I do believe you; and yet, a young girl—— Wriothesley, there is great charm in youth; and that little thing is, I hear, lovely."

"Who told you that?"

"Your cousin—Mrs. Verulam. Her feeling towards me can hardly be called love; and she thought to amuse herself by telling me that yesterday. She is not after all as clever as she looks. She told me Miss—Craven do you call her?—was sufficiently out of the common to bring all London to her feet."

"I don't know, I'm sure. To me she seemed a pretty child—no more, no less. How you dwell upon her!"—impatiently. "She is a mere baby—beautiful possibly, but uninteresting. Dismiss her from your mind."

"That I cannot. Regard it as absurd if you will, but I have thought of nothing but her all this day."

"How could you think all day of one so entirely a stranger to you?"

"She will not always be a stranger. Some day I shall meet the child whom you call Marvel, and—don't ask how, because I don't know myself—but I feel that she will have a direct influence upon my life. Will she make it or mar it? That is what lies hidden from me."

Mrs. Scarlett sighed as she ceased speaking.

"Willingly, I am sure, Marvel would injure no one," said Wriothesley thoughtfully.

The widow cast a swift sidelong glance at him from beneath her long lashes.

"Already she has found grace in your sight," she said. "The spell begins to work, you see. I tell you that girl will have much to do with your life and mine."

"Naturally," said Wriothesley gravely, "a child like that, cast so strangely into our family, must always be regarded by me as a sacred charge. So much I have promised Lady Mary, although indeed, as I told her, such a promise was unnecessary. And, as"—regarding the beautiful woman before him earnestly—"I hope your life will be closely interwoven with mine, it is probable that, as you say, she——"

Mrs. Scarlett put all that aside with a movement of her fan.

"You are going too wide of the mark," she said. "I am talking of that girl's influence over my destiny; I feel intuitively that it will not be a beneficent one."

"Have you been consulting the spirits again? How many seances have you been attending this week?" questioned Wriothesley, laughing. "You seem to have my aunt's little friend on the brain. Come—tell me why you think so much of her!"

A fond hope that she was growing jealous of Marvel was making his heart glad; but this illusion Mrs. Scarlett dispelled ruthlessly.

"Last night I dreamt of her," she said slowly. "It was a vision rather than a dream; there was no leading up to it, no beginning, no end. Quite suddenly I found myself in the midst of a terrible darkness as black as night; there were mutterings and hoarse cryings all around, and sounds of trouble and woe. Then, while I was gazing and half frightened, this blackness seemed to part in the centre, as though two sable curtains had been pulled aside, and there appeared a vague tremulous glimmer of light that grew and grew until it was almost too bright to look upon. It took the form of a perfect oval, and in its centre stood a radiant figure—a tall slender creature, half-child, half-girl, with soft floating locks and gleaming innocent eyes and a face that was purity embodied. I thought that I gazed for a long time upon this figure. There it stood immovable, smiling tranquilly, though surrounded by the awful darkness that held me—standing out from the hideous gloom with an insolence of youth and innocence that fascinated me even whilst I hated it! She did not seem to hear the cries and the mutterings, nor did the gloom awake in her any fear; the calm serenity never left the perfect face. I see it now," she said in a low tone, rising slowly to her feet and gazing straight before her—"the face—beautiful, angelic, and yet so like—like ——" She broke off, shuddering, and her face became quite ghastly. "Great Heaven, what a thought!" she gasped. She swayed helplessly, and would have fallen but that Wriothesley caught her in his arms.

"Like whom?" he asked.

"One dead—dead and forgotten," she said.

He soothed her tenderly, and after a little while she shook off the feverish horror that had seized her, and even laughed aloud at the absurd scene she had made.

"I hate to dream," she said. "It spoils a good night; and my nerves—though people tell me I am made of steel—are more troublesome than I care to say. Only to you," with a gentle glance, "I betray myself."

"All that you say only makes me love you the more," said Wriothesley. "And you—do you too love me?" he asked anxiously.

"Have you no faith?"

"A great deal; but yet I would have you say it."

"Yet what are words?"

"True!" cried he, springing to his feet. "Then give me proof!"

She knew what this would lead to, and tried to parry it.

"Have I not?" she said.

"Sweet proof indeed; but, Leonie, tell me you will marry me."

"If I did, should I be wise? Would marriage for us mean happiness or misery?"

"How can you doubt? If you love me, say you will be my wife."

"Are we not very well as we are? Why will you tempt fate further? As for me"—she threw a charming seriousness into her tone—"I dread to lose my lover."

"It would be rather to gain one for ever."

"Oh no!" shaking her head. "A lover is one thing, a husband quite another. Once I was yours, half my value would be gone in your sight."

"You trifle with me," he said impatiently. His brow darkened, and she saw at once that his mood was not one that would admit of further dallying. "I cannot say to you, 'Take time to think it over,' for you have had plenty of time in which to weigh me and find me wanting or otherwise, as the case may be. Give me then my answer now."

She rose slowly to her feet and stepped back a few paces from him, a curious expression entering her eyes.

"You command!" she said coldly.

"I entreat—I implore!" returned he vehemently. "Leonie, answer me!"

"I might indeed do that," she said, with a flickering smile. "But would that answer please you? No. In spite of all you have said, I demand yet a little more time."

"At least put a limit to my probation."

She paused, and her eyelids drooped; her fertile mind was calculating the chances for and against the success of the ambitious design upon which she had set her heart, and she decided hurriedly that she might safely promise to give Wriothesley his answer in a week.

She could so arrange that the Duke must within that time declare himself one way or the other—as her suitor openly accepted, or as a mere admirer of a fashionable beauty. In a week, then, she would be either an embryo Duchess or the fiance of an Earl.

In the brief moments during which she maintained silence, she carefully balanced the strawberry-leaves and the miserable old life attached to them with the fresh, ardent, honest lover standing before her, and mercilessly decided in favor of the former.

"Come to me this day week," she said; "then I shall know."

"It seems a long time to make up your mind about me," he said wistfully. "Still as you will."

"And now, good-night. You have startled me more than you know. I want to be alone to think it over."

She held out her hand to him, but he, ignoring it, took her into his arms and kissed her.

"I know what your answer will be," he whispered, with all a lover's fond trust—the certainty in his tone did not anger her; it only made her wince as though a sharp knife had pierced her—"why then will you condemn me to this seven day's misery? Why not make me happy now?"

"You assume a great deal," she said playfully; "yet you must remember I have promised nothing."

"Still I trust, I believe in you," he said, with passionate earnestness. "Those last words I leave with you. Good night, my love—good night."

She sat there long after he was gone, de-

liberately making out a programme for the coming week which should bring the Duke finally to her feet. At length the weary drooping of her eyelids warned her that the night was far advanced. She rose and stretched her long white arms, and a sigh of weariness escaped her.

Yes, the whole evening had been a failure. It had been singularly fatiguing; she would go to bed.

There was one thing however she would do first. She rang the bell sharply, and dismissed from her service the footman who had admitted Wriothesley.

CHAPTER VII.

THE man who woke Wriothesley at his club on the morning after his interview with Mrs. Scarlett brought him a telegram. He opened the envelope in an idle, dilatory fashion, feeling no apprehension about its contents, but as he read it the color forsook his face. It was from the housekeeper at the Towers, and it told him that Lady Mary had died quite suddenly the night before. That was all the information the telegram contained; the message was as brief as it was terrible.

It was such a shock to Wriothesley that at first he felt stunned; then he sprang out of bed and began with eager haste to dress himself. He was tormented by a sense of poignant regret that mingled with and even proved stronger than his grief.

Why had he left her last night? Her last night indeed! He remembered each word she had spoken, he saw again her kind old eyes as they rested lovingly upon him, he heard the gentle tone in which she expressed her sorrow that he should leave her then, and he recalled how sweetly she had refused to accept his offer to remain. A little spark of comfort lay in the remembrance that he had offered, and, that he would have stayed had she pressed the point; but he knew in his heart that he ought not to have left the decision with her.

The next train was due in half an hour. He gave no thought to breakfast, but rushed off to the railway station, caught the train just as it was slowly steaming away from the platform, and in about three hours found himself at the Towers. The hall door was wide open, and he entered the house with a hesitating step. There was no sound of a footfall anywhere, there were no signs of life. A melancholy silence seemed to hang over everything. Death, "the all-eloquent," alone spoke.

As Wriothesley paused, half doubting whither to go or what to do, a slender figure emerged from the library on his right hand, and came towards him with slow dejected steps through the semi-darkness of the grand old hall. It was Marvel—but what a changed Marvel! The happy childish smile was gone; the mobile mouth was given up to melancholy; grief lay beneath the lids that were drooped as if to hide the misery of the sorrowing eyes.

She came to him like a little wounded bird, and crept into his arms and laid her cheek against his.

"When was it?" he asked presently, with a heavy heart.

"Last night, quite early. We think she must have left us in her sleep."

The girl spoke in a tone of deep dejection; there was indeed a ring of despair in the young voice, proclaiming that her grief was too great for tears to relieve.

"You will like to see her?" she added, after a pause.

Wriothesley bowed his head, and once again they ascended the staircase together. This time she went with lagging steps and saddened mien, holding his hand tightly, as though she feared to lose him too; and with a thrill of emotion he recalled that other day when like a fawn she had sprung from step to step, and, laughing gaily, had conducted him to that dear one who never more would welcome them in this life.

In the chamber of death great bunches of delicately-perfumed flowers lay on all the tables, and roses freshly cut were strewn upon the bed, not profusely, but one here and there. In her life she had loved her roses well.

Wriothesley knelt by the bed and buried his face in his hands, but Marvel went up to the still figure, and, bending over it, gazed long and lovingly upon the peaceful features that looked as though they were but in a calm slumber. Thus had she gone from them, without a sigh or a struggle—

"A death-like sleep,
A gentle wafting to immortal life."

So had she ended her days, peacefully and quietly, in harmony with the beautiful life she had lived.

Marvel stood watching the dead face with thoughtful eyes. There was no dismay, no fear in them—rather an expression of comfort. If she could only be beside her thus always—if she could always have her body near, even though the soul were absent—it would not be so hard to bear, the cruel sense of loneliness would be less acute.

She felt soothed by the divine majesty of death; but, when Wriothesley arose, took her hand, and led her from the room, the look of comfort died from her face, giving place once more to one unassuageable grief.

The mournful day passed slowly, a brilliant day, warm with sunshine and glad with the songs of many birds. Although it was seven o'clock, the June sun was still shining brightly as Wriothesley, with a grave face, traversed the gardens. Someone had told him Marvel had gone out alone into that smaller rose-garden that had been her auntie's special care.

Poor lonely child! A feeling of great compassion for her led him to follow her footsteps; and presently he found her standing forlorn and miserable in the centre of the greensward, where stood a fountain, water from which played upon a laughing naiad.

Marvel was dressed in a simple little white frock—such as Lady Mary had loved to clothe her in—that reached to her throat, but left her arms bare to the shoulder. With a sad desire to put on mourning of some sort, she had found a wide black sash and had placed it round her slim young waist.

She was standing mute and miserable, with her arms hanging loosely before her, the hands clasped, as Wriothesley came up. They were long arms, and slender as a child's, but he could not help noticing how exquisitely they were moulded and how dazzlingly white they were.

He was anxious to say something that should rouse her from the stupor of grief into which she seemed to have fallen, but his imagination played him false just then, and no satisfactory commonplace remark occurred to him. At last a happy thought entered his head; he would appeal to her vanity, for all women were vain.

"Marvel!" he said gently.

At the sound of his voice she started perceptibly. She had been so lost in her meditations as to have been deaf to his approach; but now she looked at him.

"My dear child," he said, "don't you think your arms will get sunburnt if you stand there with them uncovered?"

This brilliant essay did not meet with the success it deserved. She glanced first at him, half indignantly, half reproachfully, then down at her arms, and then again at him—this time piteously.

"And if they do," she said, "what does it matter? There is no one now to see them—no one!"

She waved her hands with an air of desolation that went to his heart.

"Don't say that," he entreated earnestly. "Am I no one?"

"Oh, no," she said, her eyes filling with tears—"no one at all!"

"At least I am your friend," he persisted, though her words had greatly astonished him. "And surely friendship should count with you! And"—gravely—"do you think she would like you to be careless just because she was not here to see?"

In a vague way it occurred to him that he too was treating her as a child; and the thought puzzled him. Yet how else was he to treat her? Those large, solemn, innocent eyes were still within the realms of childhood.

She seemed impressed by his words; and, glad that he had touched her in some way for her good, he was about to continue in the same strain, when she interrupted him.

"Ah, but that is it!" she said. "That is what hurts me. I do not know now whether she cares at all, she is so gone from me."

"But is she so altogether gone from us?" argued he gently. "Would it not be a happier thing, Marvel, for you and me to try to think of her as though she had not entirely left us, but that her presence still dwelt in the old house she loved so well?"

She was looking at him very seriously as he finished. He could see that the idea pleased and soothed her.

"And, again," he went on, "you must not think that in losing her you lose all the love in your life. There is the Rector—a real friend. You have not forgotten him, have you? And, besides, there is a still older friend who cares very much for you, and who will always grieve with you in your unhappiness and sympathize with you in your joys."

"Is it you?" she asked, gazing into his eyes anxiously. "Oh, if you could only love me—if you were given to me to fill her place! But no"—despondently—"it could never be the same."

She broke down and covered her face with her hands. Wriothesley drew her gently towards him; and, with a weary sob, she laid her head against him, and, with all the abandonment of a child, threw one arm over his shoulder.

She was crying softly but bitterly; and Wriothesley scarcely knew what to say to comfort her. He smoothed back her hair, which was unbound and hung in loose rippling masses to her waist, and waited in patience until she should have in some measure recovered herself.

"You too will go!" she said at last. "Every one goes. I shall always be alone."

"I am not going," he declared cheerfully. "I shall send in my papers and resign my commission at once. I am tired of barrack life, and, indeed, such a passion for home has grown upon me that I shall probably always be somewhere that will enable me to get to you just whenever you choose. Now that doesn't sound like being alone, does it? And, do you know, I don't like being alone either; so I want you to come and have dinner with me. And how can you do that if you keep on crying so? And why is your pretty hair all loose like this?"

"She liked it so"—mournfully. "Oh, how sorry I am now that I ever teased her about letting me twist it round my head! What did it matter if all the horrid girls in the world called it a tail, if it pleased her? How selfish"—vehemently—"how unkind of me!"

"Nonsense! It was the most natural thing in the world. And, as for your auntie, I firmly believe she agreed with you about it in the end. What is the good of having a head so charmingly classic as yours if you don't show it? I am sure, if she could see you now, she would not admire your hair like that; and certainly I do not. And, as I am your guardian now, I hope you will try to be as good to me as you were to her."

"My guardian? You? Are you"—repeating the words in her astonishment—"my guardian? Are you really?"

She seemed lost in wonder for a moment, and then added:

"Was it her wish?"

"Almost her last."

"Oh, I am glad of that—thankful and glad! How she thought of everything that would please me!"—with a profound sigh. "Then now you can't go away from me!" she cried, and placed her other arm round his neck and kissed his cheek.

"You will never leave me! I shall always be with you as I was with her!"

She seemed so overjoyed at this thought that he had not the heart just then to dispel a dream that was evidently so full of sweetness to her. He persuaded her to go in to dinner with him, and made her sit next to him, and coaxed her to eat a little, bidding the servant place the *entrees* upon the corner of the table near him until he should have helped her with his own hands.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

CHINESE PUNISHMENT.—Petty thieving is the most common offense in China, but the culprit seldom repeats the crime if caught the first or second time.

Highway robbery is never repeated if the highwayman is caught, because it needs a head to plan such things, and once in the clutches of the Emperor's magistrate the bad man's head is taken away from him pretty quick. This is what makes crime so unpopular in China.

For the first offense of petit larceny the culprit receives fifty lashes on his bare back with a bamboo rod five feet long and five inches wide.

For the second offense he gets one hundred lashes, and a wooden collar weighing 100 pounds is put around his neck. This he must wear ninety days and ninety nights. The wearer cannot seclude himself, but must make calls upon his friends and walk in the streets. This is compulsory. For all future offenses the penalty increases at the above ratio until the prisoner is reformed.

In simple assault and battery cases the plaintiff must prove injury by showing blood, otherwise he will be "spanked" for making trivial complaints.

For breaking a head the penalty is similar to that for petit larceny, and for maiming it is life imprisonment. If the prisoner is rich he can escape imprisonment by transferring as much of his wealth to the injured man as would secure him a life competence without work.

In all cases bail is not accepted except from men of great literary attainments, or degreed scholars of local or national reputation. These men seldom give bail in criminal cases, unless they are satisfied of the prisoner's innocence, and then it is equal to an honorable acquittal.

All appeal for pardon on behalf of any criminal must be made through men of education holding diplomas from the various colleges. In this way the wishes of the people reach the throne.

For mischief-making or blackmail the offender's mouth is "spanked" so hard that he cannot use it for some time. Women are the principal recipients of this punishment. Any kind of highway robbery is punished by cutting off the head of the offender, while forcible entrance with intent to do injury to person or property is punished by exile.

Under no circumstances will the scribes, or silent lawyers, of China allow their names to be known in courts, the duties of the judges being to find out for themselves who is right and who is wrong. No matter if he is a lawyer or not, any man who aids another to evade the law is guilty of treason. In all cases plaintiffs and defendants plead their own causes.

Do you desire that your work should never weary you? Think that you are giving pleasure to another.

Bric-a-Brac.

A BEAM WIND.—Birds about to migrate prefer what is termed a "beam" wind. For this they will wait for days, and then, with a common impulse, start on their journey the moment a favorable opportunity presents itself.

"IN A TRICE."—Many persons use the phrase "in a trice," who have no conception of its meaning. A trice is the sixtieth part of a second of time. The hour is divided into sixty minutes, the minute into sixty seconds, and the second into sixty trices, or thirds.

THE BARBER'S POLE.—Physicians in the middle ages being priests, and a canon of the church forbidding the shedding of blood, the practice of surgery fell into the hands of a class of ignorant barber surgeons, and to this day the barber's white pole with red stripes, typifying the blood of the wound and its white bandage has never been abandoned.

SIZE.—It is astonishing to observe how few people understand the common rules of measurement in purchasing wearing apparel. For instance, a man will buy a coat that is a "size" too small or too large. A "size" smaller or a "size" larger is what he probably needs, but he does not know what a "size" is. Well, a "size" in a coat is an inch, in underwear 2 inches, in a sock 1, in a collar ½ inch, in a shirt ½ inch, in shoes 1-6 inch, in pants 1 inch, in gloves ½ inch, and in hats ½ inch. Very few purchasers ever understand this schedule.

THE PEN.—The style or point of bone or metal which was used for writing on tables coated with wax gave place to the reed, pointed and split, and used as a pen with some colored liquids. The use of quills followed, the first, it is said, to employ the latter being Isidore, who died in 636. Steel pens made their appearance early in the present century, and for the idea to which they owe their existence we are indebted to an English mathematical-instrument maker, who constructed a pen from two pieces of steel watch spring.

WHY TWELVE HOURS?—Why are the dials divided into twelve divisions of five minutes each? We have sixty divisions on the dials of our clocks and watches because the old Greek astronomer, Hipparchus, who lived in the second century before Christ, accepted the Babylonian system of reckoning time—that system being sexagesimal. The Babylonians were acquainted with the decimal system, but for common or practical purposes they counted by *sossi* and *sari*, the *sossos* representing sixty and the *saros* sixty times six—three hundred and sixty. From Hipparchus that mode of reckoning found its way into the works of Ptolemy, about 150 A. D., and hence was carried down the stream of science and civilization, and found its way to the dial plates of our clocks and watches.

MRS. JOB.—A writer in a western paper, who likes to see justice done, raises up a voice in the defense of Mrs. Job, who for 4000 years has suffered the stings of unjust criticism. She was reduced from luxury to injury, she was bereft of her children, and she had an invalid husband, who was at times doubtless very trying. It is about time Mrs. Job came in for her share of sympathy, and, while according it to her, the writer takes her case as a text for an article in which attention is called to the Jobs' wives of every community who are as burdened with cares and sorrows as the one of old and who get as little justice. Four thousand years is a long time to wait for one's dues. Why not pay up as we journey along through life.

HEREAFTER.

BY D. T.

Down deep in my heart, in its last calm sleep,
A dear dead love lies buried deep:
I clasped it once in a long embrace,
And closed the eyes and veiled the face
I never again might see.
I breathed no word and I shed no tear,
But the onward years looked dark and drear,
And I knew by the throbs of mortal pain,
That a sweetness had fled which never again
Would in life come back to me.

And dreams of the past, like roses, still shed
Their fragrance around my cherished dead:
While tears that ever are falling unseen,
Like soft summer rain, keep its memory green
As the turf on the churchyard sod.
And, weeping and watching, I pray and wait
That an angel may open the golden gate:
For I think that the love of long ago,
Though cold and dead to me here below,
Will be mine in the rest of God.

IN SEVERED PATHS

BY THE AUTHOR OF "PENKIVEL," "OLIVE VARCOE," "WITH THIS RING I WED THEE," ETC.

CHAPTER XLVI.—[CONTINUED.]

A BLANK look of terror settled on the man's face; he stood stolidly still, as if wishing to be questioned, yet afraid to answer.

"Is this the way in which young Mr. Irrian left home the last time he fled?"

"Yes, sir."

"And his father knew nothing of his departure?"

"No, sir."

"Is he aware of it now?"

"I think not. I dare not tell him. Good-night, sir!"

"Good-night," said Harold kindly. "Doubtless we shall get news in the morning."

The man shook his head and closed the door.

Once more Harold was alone, with new feelings to stir his thoughts through all the windings of his imagination.

Had Cumberland fled from his presence in fear of him, seeing his suspicions? Had Mary repeated his words, and so strengthened his sudden resolve to fly in secret, not even telling her of his decision?

She had gone in ignorance of it, Harold was certain; and he must have invented some reason to hurry her departure.

Or could it be that Cumberland was unable to endure his position in his home under the roof of the father whose face he never saw, whose voice he had never heard?

His punishment, like Cain's, had been greater than he could bear, and, like Cain, he had fled beneath the burden of it into the secret places of the wilderness.

"Poor Mary," said Harold, almost aloud, a touch of infinite pity in his voice, "what suffering awaits her! And that unhappy man condemned to loneliness, how will he endure this new misery?"

Harold glanced towards the window, for he fancied Mr. Irrian was still without: then he rose and extinguished the lamp, forgetting that now he would have to find his way to his room in darkness.

In the moment when he stood irresolute, wishing some light were near at hand, the slight noise at the window like the tapping of a finger fell on his ear again.

By the faint glow of the wood-fire he made his way to the hearth and stirred the embers; a bright flame shot up, and in the light of this he went to the window and raised the blind.

At that instant a hand touched the pane, beckoning for admittance.

It was a long gaunt hand, pale as the hand of a dead man and fleshless as a skeleton's.

Instinctively and hurriedly Harold drew back, fearing to intrude his presence on Mr. Irrian's sad eyes.

"He takes me for the servant," he said to himself, "naturally, as the man always puts out the lamp."

He imagined Mr. Irrian had been shut out inadvertently, and was now seeking admittance, and, undecided how to act, he waited a few moments, hoping to hear a servant's step or the opening of the hall door.

The silence however around him was unbroken, and then he drew back the blind again.

The darkness upon which he looked out, intensified by the flame of the wood within, hung before him like a black veil, hiding earth and sky.

Nothing was visible, not even the dim waving of the yews; and no pale figure came forward, no step sounded on the gravel.

"He has recognized me," Harold said, "and, as usual, has retreated into his solitude. I will open the window and leave the room. He will find it open when he comes again. I cannot call out to him—it would be an intrusion."

So Harold unclasped the heavy ancient casement: and, as he did this, he saw the pale hand again lying on the stone window-sill, the flame from the fire, now dying down, illumining it with a faint fitful light.

No figure was visible, for the light touched the hand only; and, as Harold opened the casement, it instantly glided upwards, and, clutching it, got within.

Startled, Harold drew back hurriedly, a strange sensation seizing him at the heart, which he reasoned down as he hastened from the room into the darkness of the great hall and staircase.

Here for an instant he stood still, and fancied he heard the casement flung back, followed by the sound of a step on the polished floor.

"I cannot have made a mistake," he said to himself. "It was Mr. Irrian. Mary saw him."

Reassured, yet uneasy—he knew not why—he hurried gropingly up the stairs, and, looking down from the gallery above, he saw the hand again gliding stealthily up the heavy oak banisters.

With a beating heart Harold watched it to the turn in the great staircase which led to Mr. Irrian's rooms. Here it touched the curtain which hung over the doorway, and vanished within the darkness.

Harold drew a long breath of relief, and yet all his flesh had turned cold.

"Mr. Irrian has a singular repelling atmosphere about him," he said to himself, as he got within the glow and light of his own room. "I am not sorry he keeps himself from the sight of his rare guests."

CHAPTER XLVII.

HAROLD passed a disturbed night. When sleep came at last, it brought vivid dreams of Estrild, of Langarth, of the ship tossing in a stormy sea, of dangers threatening her that Daniel could not avert; and mingled with these came ever a vision of the Dark Rider, whom he was following through the windings of interminable roads, with the pale hand that had clutched the window pointing the way where cross-roads met.

In the cold deep darkness of the hour before the dawn he awoke with the same foreboding and sense of danger that had touched his heart the night before. This feeling was so strong, so keen now that he resolved to rise and leave Trame with the morning light.

The prescience of evil about to fall on Estrild could not be driven from his mind, the necessity for taking some action to save her pressed upon him like a burning fever, or like a driving wind that impelled him forward on an unknown course.

It was in vain he reasoned with himself, saying again and again that all efforts of his must be futile, for he was on land and she was at sea.

What would it avail a tempest-tossed ship if he sought the shore and held out weak and frantic arms towards her across the raging waves?

Nothing, there was nothing that he could do to keep her from drifting on to wreck. But Daniel was a brave and skilful sailor; he would save the ship—he would save Estrild if man could do it.

These arguments had no effect upon the burning restlessness of his mind: he felt compelled to action as by a power outside himself, and which yet held his spirit as with a grasp of fire.

Yielding to this strange force, he rose and drew aside the curtain of his window, hoping for some dim light from sky and star by which to dress.

A faint gray tinged the east and defined the rugged outline of the great hill that towered above Trame; but the plateau on which it stood was still within its night shadow, and the river, swollen to a torrent, rushed on in black darkness.

Harold listened for a moment to its fierce roar, which sent an echo and a thrill through the old house which wandered from corridor to corridor, winding its way to every door like the wail of a lost spirit.

"It is not surprising," Harold thought, "that superstition has touched this old place with the name of a haunted house. The sound of the waterfall is like the rhythmic flow of an ancient song that speaks of battles long forgotten, of lives and sorrows wasted away; it is like—the Crusader's Chant!"

The thought struck him suddenly with a startling thrill of memory mingled with a wonder that the fancy or the reverse blance had not reached his mind earlier.

The tempest which had darkened the air the night before was now raging in full fury; great gusts of wind rushed down from the hill-tops and roared along the valley, striking the house as they swooped by with a blow that made its strong casements quiver.

It was like the rush of innumerable wings speeding in darkness to an unknown battle.

The awe of the storm added inexpressibly to the mournfulness of Harold's foreboding spirit, and the awakening dawn did not remove the weight from his mind, for it came with the growl of thunder and a downpour of fierce rain.

Too restless to remain in his room, he descended the staircase in silence and darkness, feeling dimly that, if a step should sound or a whisper be spoken, the ghost that haunted Trame might rise at his right hand and ask why he—a stranger—had come to its ancient roof to trace its secret and tell of its guilt.

As he descended the last stair of the wide flight, a door was opened, a sudden flash of light sprang out upon him, and Doctor Arnold stood before him, pale and troubled.

"Is that you, Oliver?" he said, in an astonished but low voice. "Come in here, I have something strange to tell you."

Harold obeyed, and the Doctor closed the door carefully behind him.

"I have been up all night," he said. "And what a night of storm and din! Mr. Irrian is ill—strangely ill, and feverish. He is a haunted man, he has seen the Trame ghost."

"Impossible!" said Harold, stepping back, almost angry in his amazement.

"You mean he is delirious, owing to the shock, I suppose, of his son's cruel flight."

"No," returned the Doctor gravely; "I mean what I have said. And, Oliver"—he drew closer to him and touched him on the shoulder—"I have seen it also."

Harold stared at him, and again drew back, for the Doctor's touch had a thrill of ice in it.

"Seen what?" he exclaimed. "The ghost,"—and he tried to laugh, but it was a laugh that died in his throat. "What was it like?"

"It is like the cold white hand of a dead man. It beckons incessantly. I tell you such a vision is horrible. I cannot stay here, Oliver. Who admitted it, I wonder? It can never enter the house unless door or window is opened to its importunate beckoning."

"I saw it last night," said Harold. "I opened the window at its bidding."

He fell into a chair, and his hands now were as cold as those of Doctor Arnold, who had grasped him with chill fingers.

"I thought it was Mr. Irrian," he continued, "who had been shut out by mistake."

His face was a little white, his voice rather shaken, but he was growing full of disbelief and wonder, not of fear.

"That never happens," said Doctor Arnold. "Have you not noticed a stone staircase that runs down from the carved ancient balcony outside his window? By that way he goes out and comes in unseen."

"But it was certainly Mr. Irrian at the window," persisted Harold, incredulous still.

"When? Do you mean after I left you and Mary?" asked Doctor Arnold.

"Yes."

"I went straight to Mr. Irrian then; and, although I did not enter his room to disturb him, I spoke to him from the anteroom, and wished him good-night, and he answered cheerfully."

Harold remembered the stone staircase; it descended to an unfrequented part of the grounds, densely wooded; and its balustrade and the balcony above were covered with creeping plants, the dying leaves of which hung about it, damp and listless.

"Mr. Irrian must have gone out again," he said, "after you left his room."

"I did not leave it. I have not left it all night till within the last half-hour. The casement that opens upon the balcony is in the ante-room where I sat."

"And you stayed there at Mr. Irrian's request?"

"Yes. So far from wishing to go out, he even asked me to look that casement door and keep the key."

"That was an odd request."

"From any other person it might be considered so, but not from a man of his nervous temperament. It was after I had locked this door that I saw the apparition of the hand. A curtain, as you know, hangs on the outside of the door that opens upon the staircase. I had left this unclosed, and I saw the curtain sway to and fro, as though some one was moving it from without; then the white fingers came inside, clutching it, then the whole hand entered, beckoning and pointing to the casement door I had looked. The gesture was unmistakable—I was ordered to open it. I rose, grasping the table by which I sat. I was in a cold sweat. I felt my hair rise and my heart flutter dangerously—all my blood had rushed to it. With eyes fixed, I watched the infernal thing as it quivered and beckoned, standing in the air about the height of a man's hand. There was a cold light about it which made it visible, though it was so shadowy that I constantly saw it disappear, only to appear again. My teeth chattered in my head; I could bear no more. I closed my eyes in horror as the thing drew nearer, and when I opened them again, with a great shudder, it was gone. Then I was able to speak. I called out in agony, 'Irrian—Irrian!' He answered me in a dreadful voice of calm, 'Arnold, it is here! Do not leave me!' After that there was dead silence. I know he could not speak with that hovering over him, so I waited."

Here Doctor Arnold checked his words abruptly, and flung himself into a seat with hands upon his forehead, as though it ached with the night's watching.

"If I had not seen this thing myself, Arnold, I should believe you had had a dream, or were suffering from a delusion."

"Why did you let this horror into the house?" was Doctor Arnold's answer. "I beg your pardon, Oliver. You knew nothing of this strange story. Mary ought to have told you, and warned you that the apparition that haunts Trame comes in the shape of a hand craving admittance. Now we must be silent over the whole matter, or every servant will leave the house."

"They will hear nothing from me," returned Harold, "for I am leaving immediately for London."

"I am sorry for that. I can't say I shall like being here alone; but I cannot desert Mr. Irrian till Mary returns. I shall send a messenger to her to-day to beg her to come back at once."

"A young girl is scarcely a fit person to bear the terrors of the supernatural, if this thing is beyond the pale of nature," said Harold. "Cannot you write to Mr. Irrian's son?"

"Do you suppose he has left an address? Can I send a letter on the winds after him?"

"The Irrians seem to be an unaccountable race," remarked Harold. "You know them, I presume, better than I do."

"Not young Irrian!"

"No, but his father. What is he like?" asked Harold, with pardonable curiosity.

"He is thoroughly a gentleman," said Doctor Arnold—"a man of wide benevolence and incapable of practicing any deception. I tell you this because you appear to doubt the character of this visitation. There is no charlatanism or trickery about it, I assure you. And Mr. Irrian is not proud of the family ghost: it is a matter on which he is most reticent."

"What is the history of the ghost—do you know?" asked Harold.

"It is a family secret, and the little I know of it I am not at liberty to divulge. I heard it from Mr. Irrian last night. Oliver as a medical man, I am used to strange things. I can look without shrinking into the depths of human nature, but this passes the bounds of nature—it comes from the other side, and I feel stunned and bewildered."

As the Doctor spoke a spasm of pain passed over his face: it bore the look of a man whose spirit had been shaken within him either by some terrible history or some dreadful sight.

"I feel no surprise now," he said, after a moment's pause, "at young Irrian's departure. I believe this infernal thing—Oliver, it is infernal—has driven him away."

"Surely, if the apparition bodes evil, it was not a time to desert his post!" Harold answered coldly. "He had other reasons for flight."

"Perhaps so;" and Doctor Arnold gave Harold one keen glance, then turned away abruptly. "I am thinking of flight myself," he said. "I have the key of Mr. Irrian's door here"—he touched his breast-pocket. "But, if that hand haunts me, how do I know that I shall not do its bidding, and let it carry out its horrible desire?"

"Why? What could happen if the door was opened?" demanded Harold. "You cannot suppose anything dreadful would occur through so simple an act?"

"Death would happen. Mr. Irrian would follow his son, and die. Yes; nothing could save him—he feels that. Good-bye! I cannot talk to you, Oliver. I am unhinged and may say things for which I should be sorry. Mr. Irrian is aware of your intention to leave; he does not press you to stay. A haunted house is not a pleasant abode. A carriage will await you at any hour you fix, and your host bids you good speed and a pleasant journey."

"One word more," said Harold. "If it be possible, do not tell Mr. Irrian that my hand was the one to give admittance to that creature, or thing, or ghost, or whatever it may be. I owe him much. I am sorry to be the person to do him harm."

"Do not trouble yourself; it would have entered somehow—it always does. Once more, good-bye."

He wrung Harold's hand and hurried away.

Through the long journey to London, through the whirr of wheels, the cloud of dust, or the downpour of rain that the day or the night brought upon the road, the rush of the waterfall, the time-stained towers of Trame and the vision of that pale hand haunted Harold memory with a persistent foreboding of evil to come.

At his rooms he awaited Estrild's promised summons to Langarth with a sickening impatience of the heart, that grew in strength day by day, like the burning of a fever.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

A SHIP laboring in a heavy sea, and in her best cabin her Captain dying miserably of his wound. Estrild stood by his berth; she wiped the moisture from his forehead and laid her cool hand upon it.

He looked up at her with dying eyes full of remorse and pain.

"You are very good to me, too good, I don't deserve it from you. The storm is well-nigh spent. If Daniel can leave the deck, I should like to see him, I have something on my mind. I will tell it to him—it is not fit for your ears. Pray for me the while. It may be Heaven will hear a prayer from innocent lips, even for such a lost wretch as I am. Will you touch my hand and say good-bye? No—not my right hand; it has something on it that I am always looking at. I see it even in darkness."

He held his left hand towards her feebly; she took it, with tears springing to her eyes, and pressed it gently.

"If I can be sorry for you," she said, in her softest voice, "if I can be pitiful, do you not feel that the God of infinite mercy and love will show you pity?"

"It is such as you who feel that," said the man. "It is too late for me to think of such things. Fetch Daniel: my strength is going. I can't thank you; but I feel your touch upon my hand is worth more than I can speak of—it gives me hope somehow. Yes, I'll try to believe there's forgiveness on the other side when I've crossed over. Don't come again—don't see me die—it is not a sight for your young eyes."

Feebly, yet feverishly, he raised his head slightly and watched her to the cabin door; then, when she was gone, he sank back with a heavy sigh.

"She has tended me like an angel; and I was paid to drown her, and she knows it. Then there must be something in what she says—yes all goodness is forgiving."

When Daniel came to him, his eyes were closed, and he opened them unwillingly, with the old shrinking, furtive look in them, letting the lids fall again quickly, as if fearing to meet the gaze of an honest man.

"You have something on your mind, I hear. Out with it quickly, man, and don't fear to speak; nothing in this world can hurt you now! I know you can't show a clean log; but there—you are bound for a post where, maybe, when logs are over-

hauled, allowances are made for folks who sail without a chart."

"It's all dark," returned Sinclair; "I see only my sins and sorrows, I feel only my pain. If there is anything beyond, it doesn't touch me. There's no light—no light! Fetch pen and paper and take down my words. I'd die silent, only the young lady has tried to do me good."

Daniel fetched writing-materials and sat by him, as brokenly, with many painful struggles for breath, he spoke his last confession.

"I, Richard Johnson, alias Sinclair, wish to own that I die justly by a woman's hand, because a woman's blood is on my hand. I forgive my wife my death. I confess that she and I agreed to wreck this ship the Venture. We were well paid—my wife has the money with her."

"It will do her no good," broke in Daniel. "Glass beads might save her life—gold won't."

"Let her be," said Sinclair, as a shadow stole over his face. "Write on quickly. I was to scuttle the ship and let the young lady drown; but I was to save as many of the crew as would come with me; and nothing was to be done till the young gentleman who was to sail with us was dead. The doctors had told his father he could only live a week or two. 'And so,' he said to me, 'I want the young fellow to be happy while his life lasts. Let him have his dream out; when he is gone, let the Venture and his bride sink down to the depths after him.' I should have been shocked at this, but my wife laughed, and so I took it lightly too. But, when the young lady came aboard, Mr. Vicat whispered to me, as a secret, that his son was dead, and we might hasten matters, he said, as soon as we had passed Madeira."

"Dead! Was his son dead?" said Daniel. "And he knew that when he brought his niece on board this ship to drown her?"

"Yes, he knew it—he told me of it."

"And do you know," asked Daniel, "that the dear young lady took this voyage and gave in to his plans only in the hope of saving his poor son's life?"

"I never heard that."

"Ah, Mr. Vicat is a worse villain than you," resumed Daniel; "and I hope some remorse seized him when he found his daughter was doomed to die with his niece! You didn't know Carrie Hyde was his daughter? No? Well, you know it now. Go on—I'm waiting for the rest of your story. You are past talking to."

"Yes, past all things—caring nothing now for contempt, or even for pity or love; hoping nothing, fearing nothing, and yet having a dim awakening conscience which would fain make poor amends by confession before sinking into the gulf of darkness.

"You know the rest, and how our schemes failed. The very man whom I ordered to scuttle the ship was your man, and lied when he told me he had obeyed orders."

"He had obeyed my orders. Just you put your name to this document, else it's worth nothing in law."

"Wait, I've more to say. Give me a drink; my strength is spent."

Daniel's pity grew on him as he helped the man, and his voice involuntarily took a softer tone.

"Now, mate, let us finish this yarn if we can."

"You came to our den two years ago—you dragged away a man called Trevel. Where is he?"

"Dead," said Daniel, "on board the ship where a press-gang took him and me and the gentleman who was with me."

"The gentleman, they said, was—was drowned."

"Like enough. Go on, man; you are losing time."

"I recognized you days back. It's through you I'm here. If you hadn't dragged away Trevel, I should have escaped from that den, and broke away from the woman who ——"

"There, don't talk of that, best not."

"No; you are right. Trevel and I were going up North; he had a secret to sell to a rich gentleman. His son was aboard the Alert, and there he shot the brother of the young lady here. I know he was her brother, though, when Trevel talked of him, I didn't even ask his name."

"What's the name of the man that murdered him?" said Daniel, pausing, pen in hand, his face set and stern.

"Ah, that's past me to tell! Trevel kept that secret."

"Didn't he shoot Mr. Cumberland himself?"

"No. Trevel's share in it was an accident; he swore that to me, and he was too frightened not to tell the truth."

"Well, let's hear his story," said Daniel impatiently.

"He said the gentleman was very young, and he came aboard the Alert looking pale and scared. This was at Portsmouth, just afore the Captain sailed for some outlandish place down in Cornwall, I can't mind the name."

"I know the name. Go on, man, faster! What happened when Mr. Carbonellis came aboard?"

"A fight was looked for with some smuggling craft; but the Captain dreaded bloodshed; he wanted to take the craft, not lives. So all the crew had particular orders not to fire a shot. Well, they bore down upon the smuggler in the night, and were coming to close quarters, when Trevel, who had a pistol in his hand, stumbled over a coil of rope—and that, he said, wouldn't have happened only he was startled by a whistle that came over the sea, a wild sort of cry, like the seals give in their caves on stormy nights, so he told me, and, at the minute he was recovering from his fall, he swore that the young gentleman, who was standing by him, put a hand cold as ice over his hand and fired his pistol straight into Mr. Carbonellis's breast. He fell dead instantly; and then Trevel, in the confusion, jumped overboard, for he thought he should be the one blamed, because the pistol was his, and he should have no chance of having his word took against a gentleman's; but, as I hope for mercy, he swore to me that he never touched the trigger of his pistol. That young man's hand, he said, was cold as death and strong as iron, and he it was that shot Mr. Carbonellis. Well, Trevel stopped in hiding till he heard of the wreck of the Alert; then he determined to go up North and make the father of this young gentleman pay him well for keeping quiet. He knew he must keep silent now, because he saw he'd done wrong to jump overboard; he ought to have spoke the truth at the very first. But that strange wild whistle he said, had took all strength and heart out of him, and knowing the young fellow to be the Captain's relative made him the more afraid to speak. Why the lad, he was but a lad, had such a grudge against Mr. Carbonellis that he should kill him he couldn't guess. I've no more to say; and I shouldn't have told this, only the young lady has been good to me, full of forgiveness and kindness, and I thought she'd like to know the truth about her brother; and whether she'll forgive the lad that killed him or whether she'll bring him under the law is for her to judge, not me. Only I think she's all for pity and pardon. God bless her! Guide my hand, pilot—I can't see. I'll put my name to what you've writ down. Close up the paper—the tale is told."

He sank back, the story of his own life, its sins and sorrows, told, reckoned up, and closed for ever.

* * * * * *

The funeral was over. Carrie and Estrild stood by Daniel's side as he read the service, and, when the deep blue waters had covered the dead, both moved away with hearts full of awe.

Later in the day Estrild took Daniel's arm and paced the deck, talking of many things.

"Carrie and I owe our lives to you, Daniel."

"And to Miss Armstrong and that rich friend of hers, who spent money like water."

"I do not forget them, Daniel. I shrine their names in my memory, crowned with all that my gratitude can give them. I have one thing to say, it is that I forgive Mr. Vicat for Gilbert's and for Carrie's sake. She risked her life for me, and saved her father. Daniel, his crime is buried in the depths with that poor man, it is forgotten, it has passed into oblivion."

"As you please, Miss Estrild. He deserves hanging all the same; but, since you wish it, no one shall hear of the matter from me."

"I wish it. Look at Carrie—she and her lover are very happy. Do you think I could ever let mine be the hand to lay a burden of guilt and sorrow on their kind hearts?"

"I don't think you could, miss. I don't think you could hurt a sparrow, or kill even a serpint."

"Daniel, I have been thinking much of poor Gilbert, I pitied him."

"Yes, miss; Mr. Vicat knew pretty well how to work upon your pity — the scamp!"

"I was shocked by the news of his death—not grieved, I think, for I believe it was well for him to die. He had strange gifts and powers I could not comprehend; he said they were natural, but they seemed to me out of nature. Daniel, this is not the first time I have been present at a funeral at sea. Through Gilbert's aid—how or in what way I cannot tell you, I saw Trevel buried; and when he was dying I heard his last words. He said, 'An accident, as I hope for mercy!'"

"He did say that, miss, or words meaning that; but that you heard them I can scarce believe, though I don't deny there's things on airth past our ken. I've seen myself a sight that no money would tempt me to see a again."

"I want to tell you, Daniel, that since I know for certain the words Trevel uttered were true only as far as he was concerned, I have felt happier about my brother's death. I shall break no promise in marrying Mr. Olver now."

"No, my dear," said Daniel, patting her fair delicate hand with his rough brown one. "It's all fair sailing for you now, and a safe port near to anchor in for life."

"Daniel, one word more. I do not know the name of the man who killed Tristram—I wish never to know it. I have passed through dangers and sorrows, and my life has been given to me by a miracle; then, in return, I lay my forgiveness on that man's name, and I bury it down there in the sea—the deep waters from which you and Mary Armstrong have saved me. I cannot tell why, unless it be because he was her father's friend, but I wish her to know what I have said—through you, Daniel—let her hear it from you."

"She shall, miss."

"I take your promise, we will never speak of this again. What land shall we see first, Daniel?"

"The Lizard Point, miss; and then I steer straight for Langarth."

CHAPTER XLIX.

It was sweet to be at home again, to see the old familiar places loved from childhood—sweeter still to hear the welcome given by the kindly people, and sweetest of all to see again the face of Pleasance and feel once more the peace and calm of her loving presence.

But there was a joy to come above all these—the joy of happy love. Harold would soon be on his way to Langarth.

With a beating heart Estrild counted the days and hours, and every morning's sun brought a softer rose-flush to her cheeks, a clearer brightness to her eyes, tinting her beauty with ethereal touch that made it half divine—for the painter's hand was the hand of love.

Certainly she had never been so beautiful as now, when the sea-voyage had restored health to mind and body; and, stronger in spirit than of yore, she trod her own halls in safety, all dangers past, and the hope of life and love and joy opening before her like a long vista filled with light and spread with flowers.

How shall pen describe her home-coming—the joy, the wonder, the delight, the kindly greeting from a hundred voices, the outstretched hands, the brightening eyes shining half with tears, half with joy, the exclamations and the cheers when the crowd upon the sands, watching the good ship the Venture, suddenly saw Estrild's bright face upon the deck, and Daniel by her side, waving a greeting with hand and cap lifted above his head?

Then a cheer burst forth that shook all hearts with an electric bound, and, as the enthusiasm spread, people on the heights caught up the echo, and cheered and cheered again.

When the Venture's boat touched the beach, fifty hands seized the gunwale with eager clasp, and thus, as it were, Estrild was floated in upon the people's hearts amid a thousand cries of joy.

They gave her the welcome of a queen, and she held out both her hands with tears upon her cheeks, and could not speak to thank them.

As for Daniel, the whole crowd would have hugged him with its five hundred arms, had such an embrace been possible; and, failing this, his hand was seized and shaken till he was fain to cry for quarter.

"Why, Dan'l, old Dan'l, come back alive and well! Why, Dan'l, dash my eyes, but I'm blessed if it don't do 'em good to see 'ee again on Cornish ground!"

Words like these were said a hundred times, while Michael stood with hands upon his uncle's shoulder, able only with that silent touch to speak the fulness of his heart.

"And Joe, my son—have 'ee heard aught of Joe since I've been gone?" asked Daniel, throwing his arm round Michael's neck with kindly hug, and thus relieving himself somewhat of the friendly electricity rushing through his veins which would fain have made him hug all the surging crowd.

"Joe is well," said Michael; "and he be getting on fine, sure enough. I've a letter from 'un in my pocket; you shall read 'un by-and-by. I can't tell 'ee nothin' now. I be choked up full with joy; I can't speak; my heart is aching with glory. Hallelujah, amen!"—and Michael threw his hat into the air, then rushed into a big wave to recover it, for it had fallen into the sea, and, coming back, was able to wipe his wet cheeks and say it was only sea-water on them.

Carrie stood by and saw all this, and wonde ed at it a little, being used only to London ways, where folk, being accustomed to surprises, fireworks, and princes, do not heed them much, but take them in a quiet business way more to her mind than all this enthusiasm.

But, when her own turn came to be cheered and admired, she was forced to confess it was rather pleasant.

It came about quite easily through Daniel, who at the Carbonellis Arms that night told her story and Tom's to a listening crowd; and forthwith, whether she would or no, she found herself a heroine, and she and Tom were looked on as models for all true lovers.

So, in the morning, when she went to the little church-town of Langarth, she found herself famous; and the men looked at her, and the women looked at Tom, and the children brought her flowers, and started in her face with big round eyes; and some of the boys said timidly—

"Father says you are a real heroine; you stood by the young lady, even when you thought you'd drown for it."

And the little girls took Tom's hand, and, with the boldness of girls, asked if it was true that he was a brave sweetheart and had gone to sea for the pretty lady's sake.

"And mother says there's few sweethearts nowadays like you to risk their lives for love. And what's love?" the little ones asked, and ran laughing away, unanswered.

In the evening when work was over, the people, thinking they had not said enough came in a crowd to Langarth, and asked to see Carrie and Tom.

So Pleasance and Estrild made them stand out upon the balcony outside her windows, and on appearing they were cheered as though they were a royal bride and bridegroom.

Then Michael, coming forward from the crowd, made a little speech, declaring, if Tom was not such a real right-down good fellow, the Cornishmen, one and all, would dispute his right to Carrie, for they were in love with her themselves.

But, since he was brave and she was brave, they deserved each other.

"And we thank 'ee with all our hearts for what you've done," concluded Michael. "And one and all we wish 'ee joy, and long life, and many children good as yourselves!"

Then the cheers rang out again, and Carrie laughed with tears streaming fast upon her face, and was fain forced to run away and throw herself weeping into Estrild's arms.

"Here am I," she sobbed forth, "crying for joy, and made a heroine of when I don't deserve it, and poor mother in such sorrow at home! Mother is the true heroine; but she's old, and she isn't in love, so the name won't fit her, you see! Oh, dear, how foolish everything is!"

So Carrie said; and yet her eyes were shining with happy tears, for, although her heart was heavy for all the grief at home, of which she had heard from Pleasance, yet she knew she could bring comfort to her mother by her helpful presence, and she felt that what she had done for Estrild had gained forgiveness for her father.

And so the sun went down on the second day of their home-coming with that mingling of joy and sorrow that all days bring, and Estrild said to Pleasance:

"To-morrow Harold will have my letter—surely he will start at once! Oh, I hope he will not delay his coming!"

"My dear, why should he delay his journey? Of course he will be here as quickly as the mail can bring him."

"Will he?" asked Estrild wistfully. "Oh, I fear something may happen to detain him! I am afraid of I know not what."

"You are afraid of your own joy," Pleasance answered; "you have passed through dangers and anxiety, and now that peace has come it startles you."

"But I am not at peace, Pleasance; I am full of gloomy fears."

Pleasance smiled a little sadly.

"There crops out the Carbonellis temperament," she said, "which sea and storm cannot cure or change. It is the unwonted calm around you after the tempest which fills you with apprehension."

"Is it not the calm before the storm which is always full of dread? You may think it is a mere fancy, Pleasance, but it is true that amid all the dangers I have passed I never felt so fearful as I do now."

At that moment Carrie entered, her bright face lighted up by a smile.

"What a queer superstitious old man Prior is!" she exclaimed. "I left him scaring Tom with the story of the Black Rider who brings death to Langarth. It sounds real, but of course it can't be true; and I came away lest I should shock him with my disbelief."

Estrild flushed painfully, and Pleasance made a sign to Carrie to be silent, but she did not see it.

"Londoner as I am," she continued, "I still have a touch of sympathy with these old faiths, even if I laugh at them; but I should never permit them to influence me gloomily."

"That would depend upon your experience of them," said Pleasance.

Carrie laughed.

"Oh, I have never seen a ghost," she answered, "though my mother has! The old Crusader, you know, paid her a visit—as she declared. Of course it was, in fact, a ghost clothed in flesh, and in garments of a good cut—unless the whole thing was a dream, as I have sometimes thought it was; in which case I should confess that there was a strange coincidence between the subject of her dream and the terrible event that occurred here."

"Amid the million dreams that visit half-sleeping brains, it would be singular indeed if a few had not a touch of truth in them," observed Pleasance.

Estrild turned from the window where she had been standing, and laid her hand on her cousin's arm.

"You say that for my sake, Pleasance, but you know well that human reasoning cannot touch some mysteries."

"Then we will leave them untouched, my dear. Let us go and see Daniel. He is the healthiest man alive—his mind is sound and clear as a ray of sunlight; he will do us good."

"He is a wonderful man for dreams, for all that," said Carrie, still in a laughing tone. "I liked his stories, for I enjoy a good mystery with a touch of the awful in it, though I never make myself miserable over things not quite clear to my own stupid head."

"Carrie, you are out of tune with me today," Estrild said abruptly. "Pleasance, I will dress, and meet you down on the lawn."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

A BLOW ON THE NOSE.—It has been said that the hurts suffered in pugilism are particularly severe, and that few pains equal the pain resulting from a blow of the fist squarely and forcibly delivered upon the nose. An incident which goes to support this allegation is reported from Paris. A lion tamer, in one of the boulevard shows, was set upon by a powerful and irritable old lion whose cage he had entered, according to habit, in the course of an entertainment. The beast made his attack without warning or particular cause, and in an instant the man was upon his back between the lion's paws. The spectators screamed, thinking it was an end of the lion tamer, but, like a flash, he was upon his feet, and striking out with his right, in accurate pugilistic style, landed his fist upon the lion's nose, with a seat that was heard all over the place. The lion wheezed and sneezed and backed away, shaking his head and shutting his eyes as if dazed, while the man stepped quickly, but with dignity, out of the cage. The blow was a good one and if it had fallen upon a man would undoubtedly have "knocked him out."

The less we deserve good fortune, the more we hope for it.

YOU AND I.

BY C. W. Y.

Under the oaks in the Summer eves,
When we pelted each other with fallen leaves,
Out in the fields when the hay was dry,
We wandered together, you and I.
Don't you remember those long hot days
When we lay in the shade, and the noon-tide haze
Quivered a lullaby to our eyes,
And the wild-roses nodded in shy surprise—
When the vagrant breeze peeped into the hedges?
Down by the river the tall wet sedge
Stared at itself in placid pride;
The wood-dove cooed to its mate, "Abide,
Abide with me—ah, stay and rest,
And let me nestle against thy breast!"
The blackbird piped in a distant grove;
All Nature sang and breathed of love.
Don't you remember those days gone by,
When we trusted in loving, you and I?

COLLIE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "GUY'S CHORISTER,"

"HIS GOOD ANGEL," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER I.

"COLLIE. Collie, come here, will you please?"

It might have been thought that the speaker was addressing an obstreperous sheep-dog, and the name seemed to apply to some four-footed follower; but, in answer to it, a fair-faced girl ran up to her beautiful cousin.

"What is it, Nora," she asked quickly—"what can I do for you?"

"Lace up my dress," her companion returned roughly; "and make haste about it. Ugh!" she added, with a shiver, as Collie applied herself to the task. "What horrible fingers you have! They are always as cold as a serpent's skin. You make my flesh creep when you touch me!"

Her cousin did not answer; but she remembered, with just a touch of bitterness, the chilly room in which she had been sitting.

In the attic allotted to her the windows rattled in their sashes, the door would not remain shut, and showed the light through all its chinks and crannies, and the wind rushed down the big chimney unhindered by any grate.

She had been toiling to have her cousins' dresses ready for them, and her numbed little fingers were rough and sore with hard work.

She sighed involuntarily.

"What are you doing that for?" Nora Burnett demanded sharply. "Don't add the unpleasant habit of breathing loud to your other accomplishments. You are vulgar enough already."

"I only sighed," the girl said plaintively—then almost sighed again, but checked herself. The words rose to her remembrance, "Grief is the luxury of the rich alone."

"What have you got to sigh about?" her cousin Bertha snapped. "I'm sure you ought to be happy. How I hate ingratitude!"

"So do I," Collie murmured gently. "I trust I may never live to be accused justly of that sin."

Nora turned upon her.

"Have you finished fumbling with that lace yet? Not quite? Why, the stupidest little maid-of-all-work would do better than you! By-the-bye, speaking of ingratitude, see that you don't show it to-night by letting the fire out, as you did last week. I don't forget things either," she added viciously; "and I sha'n't forget that. If it occurs to-night again, you shall sit in a cold room all to-morrow, as a punishment, and feel your thankfulness on bread and water."

"You know how sorry I was about it," Collie pleaded in low sweet tones, "and how it happened. I had been up so late at night and so early in the morning for such a long time, and I was almost tired out. And there were your dresses to finish and your bonnets to make for the concert, so that I could not have a sleep while you were away."

"Hold your tongue!" commanded Nora; and Mrs. Burnett, a faded scraggy woman in a preposterous cap, added in just the weak querulous tone that might have been expected from her:

"I am sure you need not grumble, Collie, when you are given a stitch of needlework to do. When we brought you here to live, instead of sending you to the workhouse, it was on the condition that you should make yourself useful, and help in whatever way you could in the house. There are plenty of expenses, goodness knows, without another to add to them! It's little enough you do, though, sitting, dream, dream, dreaming constantly, and eating me out of house and home, so to speak. I'm sure I don't know how to make both ends meet sometimes, and, if you aren't thankful for your mercies——"

The girl's eyes filled with tears, and she clasped her slender hands together with a touching, appealing gesture.

"Indeed, indeed I am thankful—most thankful, aunt!" she cried. "I would do anything in the world for you and my cousins, and grudge no time nor trouble. I never forget what you have done for me—I never shall. But if you would add to it, and give me—give me——"

She hesitated.

"Give you what?" asked Bertha indignantly.

She had neither the beauty nor the wit of her younger sister, and seemed to strive to fill their place with shrewishness alone.

"I never saw such a girl as you are! You are constantly asking for something, and are never content in the end."

Collie's low tone sank lower as she answered, but they might have thrilled the coldest heart, so yearning were they.

"Only," she faltered—"only a little love I ask for. That is worth all the rest. I seem to have wanted it so terribly since my mother died, and to have had so little—I long for it more than anything in the world. I love you all—can't you—won't you love me?"

She stretched out her hands appealingly, but, as no friendly fingers touched hers, let them drop again to her side.

A few seconds' pause succeeded the movement, and then Nora burst into a laugh.

It was echoed loudly by Bertha and more faintly by their mother, in whose breast had been struck a chord which sounded for a moment.

But the merriment ceased quickly; and Nora, tossing her head with a disdainful gesture, said scornfully—

"A pretty thing to beg for! Who could care for a wretched little Cinderella like you? What do you do to make yourself loved? As my mother says, you dream and dream, though I call it mooning, half your, or rather, half our time away. You forget what we order you to do, you mend our clothes badly, you let out our fire when we go to a ball, you never have any amusing bit of gossip to entertain us with, and you are altogether as stupid a little piece of lumber as ever was left to the mercy of charitable folk. Loved indeed! No, my dear; you must wait till you get a sweetheart before you can look for that happy consummation, and, when you do, you may be sure that his affection will be disinterested. There can be no doubt of the fact that your face is your only fortune, and so you must be content with being poor."

Having relieved herself by this witticism, which was received with due appreciation by her admiring relatives, the beauty turned her back on her despised cousin, in order to catch a glimpse of her own mollified face in the glass opposite to which she stood, and so to be still further gratified.

It was scarcely to be wondered at that her admirers, looking only at that radiant beauty, and hearing her sweet caressing accents, should fancy Nora Burnett a perfect specimen of womanhood.

Her mother and sister might, had they pleased, have told a different tale, for, though amiably indifferent when their constant efforts for her gratification succeeded, they had a wholesome fear of the passion she displayed when she was crossed.

But it was her dependent cousin Collie Marchmont who suffered most; she it was who was made the scapegoat of all the others' sins, she who had to bear the impatience, the vindictiveness, and the evil tempers of her beautiful cousin.

In this, as in other things, the Burnett family followed the lead of its acknowledged head, and, as they did so with a closeness that savored of a liking for the path, poor Collie's life was not a very happy one.

A smile of most angelic innocence and tenderness crept over Nora's fair face as she looked at herself.

The crimson lips were slightly parted, and the great blue eyes shone with an exquisite radiance.

A mass of burnished golden hair rippled back from the low white brow, and the soft tinge of her cheeks was like the first flush of the apple-blossom when it shows its petals in the spring.

Behind her Collie stood looking into the mirror, with no eyes for her own beauty, but only admiration for the loveliness of the other.

Yet she might well have bestowed some of that admiration on herself; and, lovely as her cousin undoubtedly was, there could have been found judges to give the palm of beauty to her.

She was tall and very slight, and beside the full-blown splendor of the other looked almost a child.

But her figure and her carriage had a grace and a lightness which were lacking in her cousin, and her small head was set on her shapely neck with an exquisite dignity.

Her little feet were slender and arched, and her hands, though disfigured and roughened by hard work, like her tiny ears, were of perfect shape and proportion.

But in the deep light and splendor of Collie's pretty eyes everything else was lost.

Changing with each changing expression, lightening or clouding over with every passing breath of joy or sorrow—they seemed to mirror her very soul; in every glance they spoke of truth and fidelity and the fearlessness of innocence.

The long lashes that shaded their beauty were dark and curling, and showed almost black on the pale cheeks, and the delicately-pencilled brows relieved them from all imputation of weakness.

The lips were full and sensitive, and were trembling just now under the sting of her cousin's sarcasms.

Poor Collie was clad in worn and faded garments, thrown aside ungraciously for her by her relatives as quite beyond their use; they were flaunting in silks and satins made in the most costly and extravagant style; yet she looked what they did not—a lady to her very finger-tips.

It took a long time before Nora was assured that each curl was in its proper place, and that the flowers in her dress were arranged, leaf by leaf, to her satisfaction; but even her toilet was completed at last, and she turned away from the glass with a final sigh of gratified vanity.

"Come," she said, without waiting to see whether her mother and sister were as far advanced as she—"come, we really must be off. We have a long way to drive, and it is the stupid fashion nowadays to be punctual at a dinner-party. Dear me," she added, "how foolish of me to forget what I intended to do! I meant Collie to have made me up my Brittany cap and the apron to match for the tableaux vivants at the P——s' next week, and I have not left out the materials. I can't go upstairs now to look for them, so I shall not have my work done, and she will have nothing to do. How stupid I am!"

"Could I not find them for myself?" the girl asked gently. "I should enjoy doing it for you, and it is just the right sort of work for gaslight."

"It is a very likely thing that I should trust you with the keys of my wardrobe!" her cousin answered sharply. "Why, I have no end of feathers and lace and jewelry lying about there, not to speak of letters and all sorts of private papers!"

Collie's sensitive face flushed a vivid crimson.

"I am neither a thief nor a spy," she retorted hotly, "and you, even you have no right to speak as if you suspected me."

"How dare you answer me!" cried Nora, her transitory good-humor vanishing suddenly. "Remember, you impertinent little thing, that I am mistress here. I say what I like, do what I please, and submit to no insolence from any one."

Poor Collie's flash of anger was as transient as had been Miss Burnett's amiability.

Her spirit had been so subdued by the troubles that had come into her young life, and her nature was so delicate and yielding that she bore unkindness and neglect with a sad meekness and humility, and, forgetting immediately the suffering which the coldness and cruelty of others brought upon her, or blaming herself, was always ready to be thankful if they gave her the smallest crumbs of kindness.

"Forgive me!" she murmured. "I did not—indeed I did not mean to be impertinent. Only—I never told a lie in my life, and just for a moment I felt it so hard not to be trusted."

"'Beggars must not be choosers,'" put in Bertha, with a disagreeable laugh, "and you are bound to put up with whatever we please to say to you. As they tell the little children, 'you may see, hear, but say nothing, as you eat, drink, and pay nothing.' By-the-way, that is most appropriate, as it is exactly the case with you. Well, as Nora cannot give you anything to do, I will."

"Yes?"

"When I am gone, you can run upstairs to my room, and there on my desk you will find that article on the 'Æsthetics of the Commonplace,' which I mean to send to the "Fortnightly." I want a fair copy of it made, and that will just occupy your evening charmingly. See that you write plainly, and be sure to leave a good margin and make no mistake in spelling. Remember the diphthong in 'æsthetics,' and take care——"

But Nora was evincing signs of evident impatience.

"Do stop!" she exclaimed. "If you can trust Collie with your stupid work, trust her and have done with it, if not, leave it alone; but in any case let us have no more preaching. We must go. The fly has been waiting ever so long, and I am sure dinner will be in the same predicament. Collie, lift up my skirts carefully. Oh, for mercy's sake, child," she added, with an angry twitch, "don't crush them like that! What a stupid little monkey you are!"

"I was looking at you," her cousin pleaded humbly, her eyes filled with the most genuine admiration. "I always knew you were lovely; but I never saw you so beautiful as to-night. Nothing could be so becoming to you as this pure white silk and these pearls. What a bride you will make!"

The girl spoke out slowly her simple honest thoughts without dreaming of flattery.

She to whom the praise was addressed accepted it as her due, and was not displeased. Her vanity was a never-satisfied passion, which craved eternally for new food.

"Yes," she said, looking gratified, and speaking in a kinder tone than she had yet employed—"yes, I think I may flatter myself that I am looking rather well, and, to tell the truth, I have my own reasons for wishing to do so. We are going to meet some one particular to-night."

Collie looked strangely troubled, and the pink crept up to her cheeks again as she said—

"I suppose you mean Geoffrey Treherne?"

"Precisely, my witch of a cousin. I do mean Geoffrey, or Sir Geoffrey Treherne, as it might be more proper for you to call him. He is not your relative yet," she added, with a light laugh, "and perhaps, even when he is, I may not permit you to take liberties with his name."

"I hope he never will be my relative. I don't like—I can't trust him," responded the young girl, with a slight shudder. "I lose the impression after a little while; but at first I feel, when I see him, that a snake has crept into the room."

"Well, I mean to be snake-charmer to-night," said the beauty, laughing.

"I wish you would not talk like that," interposed Mrs. Burnett discontentedly. "Just for all the world as if we were the poor heathen Indians that we paid a shilling to see at the Aquarium. I hate reptiles, and I'm sure I don't know what you mean, Collie, by speaking so disrespectfully of Sir Geoffrey Treherne and comparing him to a snake, when he is a member of the peerage and our natural superior, and especially yours."

Mrs. Burnett's blunders were frequent, and were always a source of amusement and ridicule to her daughters.

Nora did not attempt to disguise her feelings.

"Sir Geoffrey Treherne is not a member of the peerage, mamma," she said contemptuously. "He is only a baronet, and his grandfather was no doubt a plough-boy, or a shoemaker, or something equally aristocratic. So his blue blood cannot trouble him, and need not trouble us. As for his being our superior," she drew herself up to her full height, and looked proudly conscious of her beauty, "I think there is one at least in the family that can rival him in looks and wit, while even Cinderella here can beat him in good temper!"

"I don't trust him," Collie repeated.

"Well, nobody asks you to," her cousin rejoined sharply. "There—we have heard quite enough about your likes and dislikes! Sir Geoffrey Treherne happens to be my consideration, not yours, and, if I should marry him, it is entirely my own concern. As for trusting"—she gave a contemptuous shrug of her shoulders—"I would trust no man farther than a liberal marriage-settlement gave me cause, so you need not fear for me. Come, mamma, do let us get away. Bertha, in the name of all that's ugly, stop staring at yourself in the glass and come downstairs. And, Collie, remember my injunction, and have a good fire and the kettle boiling, so that we may have some tea. If you don't, it will be the worse for you."

"And, as it is only a small and early we are going to after the dinner, you had better lose no time in beginning that MS. Otherwise you won't have it finished for me, and I want particularly to send it off to-morrow. Do it carefully, or——"

"I think, as you will be sitting by yourself, you might as well let the fire out, and save the coals," broke in the thin voice of Mrs. Burnett. "You can sit with a shawl round you, if you are cold. You must light the fire again about one o'clock, and that will be quite an amusement for you, and help to pass the time. See that you burn only one candle, and don't take any butter with your supper, if you have cheese, and——"

"Will you come, mamma?" said the beauty, stamping her foot. Whereupon her mother, in wholesome fear, shambled after her daughters, leaving her sister's child to solitude and work.

CHAPTER II.

NOTWITHSTANDING her cousin's imperative injunction about losing no time, Collie Marchmont did not begin her task without delay.

As the noise of the carriage-wheels died away, she sank down, with a sigh that sounded like one of relief, into the easy-chair that stood beside the fire, and, with her hands folded before her and her lovely eyes fixed upon the glowing coals, fell into a waking dream.

It was seldom indeed that she had leisure to indulge in thoughts of the past or the future, and the luxury was too rare a one to be lightly thrown aside.

In the flickering flame she saw her dear old home, with the roses and the honeysuckle nodding to her through her little window.

The ticking of the clock on the mantelpiece and the sighing of the wind outside blended themselves with her dream, and once more she listened to the creaky old organ in the village church, and heard the choir-boys' shrill singing and her father's orthodox, respectable, quiet preaching.

But he faded from her view, laid low in the green God's acre near, and only her mother and Sidney and she were left.

As she thought of that mother, the parting seemed as dear and as bitter as it had been two years before, when she lost her.

She remembered with the old sharp pain how her mother had faded away day by day, and how comforts were hard, and luxuries impossible, to procure.

Then there came the time when the two children followed that loved one to the grave, and, after that, went home to the Burnetts'.

Home! What a mockery the word seemed!—for Collie had been brought to a life of drudgery, and a situation found for Sidney, with which and fifty pounds a year he was told he should be more than content.

And so the lad was turned adrift to the trials and temptations of London life in lodgings, encouraged by no kind words, no wise and gentle advice.

He was not welcomed at his aunt's—he was too frank and outspoken to be a favorite there—and he so heartily disliked the whole family that, but for his sister, he would have asked nothing better than never to enter the house again.

Poor Collie's life was too monotonous and her slavery too complete for her to see pictures of the future in the fire; if she did, they were only for her brother, her unselfish nature never thinking of dreaming for itself.

The striking of the clock roused her from her reverie.

"Seven o'clock!" she exclaimed, rising hurriedly. "I must go and look for my task. I know from experience it will be long, and I am so stupid that I always find

Bertha's writing very difficult to make out."

Miss Burnett, having no pretension to beauty, set up for a "blue."

She told her friends that she had written a great deal, which was true; but she did not add, what was equally so, that as yet nothing of hers had been printed.

Her enemies declared that she found her claim to the title of authoress on a calligraphy that it was almost impossible to decipher, and by this means one was debarred from knowing how prosy her writings were; but, as poor Collie had already succeeded in the task of transcribing more than one in a fair round hand, this may be assumed to be a calumny.

Certainly the one she was left to work at on this evening answered to a part of its title at least—it was infinitely commonplace, if only slightly concerned with æsthetics; and Collie, poring over her cousin's hieroglyphics by the light of the single candle allowed her, and tired as she was, was weary and eyesore before half an hour had elapsed.

She threw down the pen impatiently at last.

"What am I to do?" she said aloud. "My head aches so that I cannot understand one word of this thing. I have spoilt two sheets of paper already, and I am sure I have made no end of mistakes that I have not noticed. Oh, dear, oh, dear! I wish the 'Æsthetics of the Commonplace'—whatever they may be—were burnt!"

"Then burn them by all mean," said a merry young voice at the door. "You need something to improve the fire, I think."

"Oh, Sid! Is it you? How glad I am to see you, my dear, dear boy! Did you know I was alone to-night? How did you find out?" cried Collie, all in one breath, throwing her arms tightly round her brother's neck.

"Gently, gently, my child! For your own sake, I advise you not to choke me, as I should not then be able to answer your questions, and you would certainly die from the effects of ungratified curiosity. Your fate might of course add another verse to the once popular song of the 'Orrible Tale; ' but I doubt if that would console you altogether for your untimely decease. Well, I did know you were to be alone to-night; a little bird told me."

"A little bird? What was it?"

"Ask no questions, my dear. You know the vulgar continuation. Be a good girl, and you will find it all out in time. But, Collie, what a fire for a winter evening, when the frost is hard enough to freeze the milk in the pails! Your nose is red," he added, looking critically at her and speaking with a brother's candor, "your cheeks are blue, and altogether you look frightful!"

"I feel rather cold," the girl replied, with a shiver; "but aunt told me to let the fire out, and I dare not——"

"Bosh! Why are you so afraid of these women, Collie? Well, it is not of much consequence, after all. Anyhow, let us have a blaze with this trash."

The boy, a bright blue-eyed lad with curly hair and perpetually-laughing face, stretched his arm across the table as if to reach the MS., and Collie in alarm tried to snatch it from him.

But, as she did so, her hand struck the ink-stand, and a black stream poured over the pages, obliterating for ever the valuable lucubrations of Miss Bertha Burnett.

The two culprits gazed at each other in dismay, then the girl gasped:

"Oh, Sidney, what have you done? You have spoilt Bertha's writing, and she will never forgive me."

"Don't blame me," her brother answered, rather roughly. "I did not do it. It was all your own fault that the accident happened. You might have known I was only joking about putting the stupid thing into the fire. I wish I had now, and had done with it. Bertha might vent her wrath on me to her heart's content. I shouldn't mind."

"I don't know what I shall do! Oh, Sidney, sometimes I wish I were dead! I never try to do anything but I spoil it, and that makes them all so angry with me. I am not the least little bit of use in the world; I wish——"

"I wish I had not such a stupid sister! There is no use in crying over spilt—ink, Collie, and you can console Bertha by reminding her that her fellow-genius, Carlyle, lost the whole of the first volume of his French Revolution in the same way, a loss even more serious than hers. Now dry your eyes, Collie, and don't make yourself look altogether frightful. I have come to take you out with me, and I expect you to do me credit."

"To take me out!" she echoed incredulously. "Where are you going to take me?"

"To the theatre, my dear child. I have prepared to astonish you! I have a box for the Frivolity, and I am going to allow you, provided you will make yourself as respectable as your appearance permits, to share it. So go and rig yourself out in your best apparel, and, if you have nothing sufficiently gorgeous, borrow it from your cousins."

"I should love to go!" said Collie, clasping her hands delightedly, while her eyes sparkled with rare pleasure. "But, oh, I dare not! I have work to do, and they will be home by two o'clock."

"Well, we shall be home long before them. Play-going folk, even the greediest, would grumble if the curtain did not fall before that. And, as for your work, what is it?"

"My writing. Oh"—as her brother pointed deliberately to the ruined papers—"I forgot! What shall I do?"

"Well, 'in for a penny, in for a pound,' and you may as well be hanged for a sheep as a lamb. Seeing that it is manifestly impossible for you to copy that manuscript, you may as well be out enjoying yourself as sitting at home mourning over its lost beauties. Come, which is it to be? You must decide quickly if we are to get there in time for the burlesque."

"Oh, Sid," the girl said, wavering, "you don't know what a dreadful temptation it is to say 'yes.' I do so want to go, and to be with you; but I am afraid. And, dear, where did you get a box from?"

"Oh," the lad answered evasively, "one of our fellows gave it to me. Any one can get paper nowadays. But do go and get ready, there's a good girl!"

"You are quite, quite sure it is not wrong?"

"How can it be wrong?" he replied impatiently. "You cannot be perpetrating an impropriety, even in the eyes of the old woman, by going when you have your brother to chaperon you, and you are not their slave to obey them hand and foot. Now look! I give you five minutes to make up your mind and rectify your personal appearance, and after that I go, with or without you. I promised to be down by nine."

"You promised! Promised whom?" the girl asked, stopping quickly on the threshold.

"I will tell you all about it when we are off. In the meantime, I shall not answer another question. Don't put on any bonnet, you know, and stick a flower, or a feather, or something of that sort in your hair to make you look smart. You have a shawl, I suppose, for your shoulders, and we can stop going down and buy a pair of light gloves."

"Must I have light gloves?" Collie asked in dismay. "I can't. I have no money to spare."

"But I have," he assured her, mimicking her tone of distress.

"You? Where?"

"Another question! Now I warn you that really and truly in five minutes I shall be off. Are you going, going——"

"I am gone," the girl cried, with a radiant face, suddenly giving herself up to the pleasure of the moment. "Only to think of going to the theatre with you, Sid, and to a box too, as if we were ever so grand! I shall feel as if to-night I were in very truth the Cinderella they call me, and shall expect to see the Fairy Prince."

"True words are often spoken in jest," the boy muttered, as the door closed behind his sister. "And you may not be far wrong in your anticipation. At least I shall be very much surprised if it is either for my own sweet sake, or that of my cousins and my aunt, that Sir Geoffrey Treherne gave me a box for to-night, and tipped me a couple of sovereigns, just 'in case I should be short of change!'"

CHAPTER III.

ONCE her mind was made up, and her eyes determinedly closed to the enormity of her offence, Collie was not long in getting ready.

In truth the girl had little choice of dresses in her scanty wardrobe.

Still, there was an old white one there which, if not particularly fresh, was at least clean, and, she being one of those few fortunate women who cause what they wear to be unnoticed, even her brother could not help remarking, as she came back to him with cheeks glowing, and eyes liquid and dark with pleasure, that she "would do."

Once given over to the intoxication of delight, everything increased it.

The rapid drive in the hansom through the lighted streets, the crowded Strand, the brilliantly-lit box-office, were all new and vivid pleasures.

Many men stared curiously at the couple as they entered.

The young girl, unused to such a scene, shrank timidly nearer her brother, while he, though inwardly nervous, advanced boldly, if uncertainly.

There were audible comments too among some of the spectators upon the new beauty; but, if she heard, she did not dream that they could refer to her.

"We are in time for the burlesque, after all," Sidney said, in a tone of suppressed excitement, as the attendant showed them their places; "and, by Jove, what a jolly good box! It is one of the best."

Collie gazed round the theatre in speechless delight: it was her first visit to such a place, and she felt as if she must be in some scene of enchantment.

The mass of faces, the gaily-painted curtain, the bright music, even the very footlights were all new sources of wonderment.

Her brother laughed at the expression on her amazed face.

He managed to find his way to the theatre often enough, though it might only be to the gallery.

"You look like an owl in the sunshine," he observed laughingly.

"And I feel—I can't tell you how I feel, Sid. It is the most wonderful thing I ever dreamt of, much more saw; and—oh!"

She gave a little exclamation as the curtain rose, and for the first time she looked upon a stage.

Till her dying day Collie will never forget that evening. It was true that the newspapers had unfavorably criticised that burlesque, that the critics had called it stupid, antiquated, cribbed.

To her it was the most exquisitely beautiful, wildly humorous thing ever witnessed.

The girls were angels of loveliness, the dancing the perfection of grace. Even the songs were new to her and delightful, and the miserable old puns were witticisms of the highest order.

Not a few opera-glasses were turned towards the box where the girl sat, and not a few bored-looking men in the stalls seemed to find her excited lovely face better worth gazing at than the ballet, and her intense delight more amusing than the jokes.

She however did not bestow any attention on the audience.

Her interest was wholly concentrated on the stage; and so absorbed was she in the action of the piece that she neither heard the box-door open nor saw any one enter, till suddenly she noticed her brother move away, and a tall figure, in faultless evening dress, take his place.

She looked up, and her face paled and all the delight died out of it, as she saw that the new-comer was the man she so distrusted, Sir Geoffrey Treherne.

The Baronet bent low over her small hand. His eyes were fixed upon her with an admiration in them which made her thrill strangely, and yet shudder at.

"I cannot tell you," he said, in a low tone, "how honored I feel that you should have accepted my invitation for this evening."

"Yours?" she exclaimed, in a half-frightened voice. "Yours! Oh, Sid!"

She looked round for her brother, and he came forward, reddening slightly.

"I asked my sister on my own responsibility," he said.

Geoffrey Treherne heaved a sigh, and cast down his fine eyes.

"Then," he said, "I am disappointed. I had hoped Miss Marchmont knew the favor she was granting me, and, so knowing, was making it a thousand times more precious."

"You told me," the boy began.

"I told you?" the Baronet interrupted, looking at him with a slight frown. "Ah, you were going to say that I told you I should take the liberty of coming into your box to see you this evening! Is it an unpardonable one? In truth, you must both blame yourselves—you, Sid, for making no objection when I proposed it, and you, Miss Marchmont"—his voice sank to a low caressing tone—"you for being the loadstone which drew me here."

Again she looked up, startled.

"I—I?" she stammered. "I thought you were to be at the Forrests' this evening. My cousin—I mean all of them—expected to see you there."

"I know they did," he answered, with a somewhat sardonic smile; "and therefore I felt certain that you would be alone and disengaged. If I had not been sure, I doubt whether, even with the inducement I spoke of, I should have had the courage to suggest such an escapade as that of to-night."

She could not help smiling.

"You would have fared badly then," she rejoined. "And your suggestion would have met with the fate which perhaps it deserves. Cinderella is kept in the kitchen when her step-sisters are at home, and has no chance of an outing! There," she added, flushing, "how mean and ungrateful of me to speak in such a manner, leading you to think I am treated——"

"I know exactly how you are treated," he put in quietly; "and, believe me, I wish with all my heart that I had the right to resent it. There," he went on more gaily—"if we don't listen more and talk less, we shall find ourselves turned out of the theatre, and, as I have to suggest a grand termination to this dissipation, that would not suit my plans at all. How would you like a champagne supper? Come, Sid, I see your sister looks shocked—it is for you to give the casting vote. Here we are in the Frivolity, the very name of which suggests all sorts of harmless dissipation—what is there to prevent us from just going down and having a jolly little supper to finish up with, before taking Miss Marchmont home? We will drink to a repetition of this most delightful evening in the best 'fizz,' and will show her that, when we do have the honor of her company, we know how to appreciate it."

"It would be stunning," declared Sid—"just the proper way to end the night!"

Collie shrank back.

"I think—I think I would rather not," she said timidly. "I am afraid."

"Afraid? Afraid of what? My dear Miss Marchmont, do you think I would try to persuade you to anything that might injure or compromise you? Besides, you have your brother's protection, and what more can you need? Come," he added persuasively—"every one does it. I assure you"—his voice had a little ring of laughter in it—"your cousin Nora would not hesitate a moment to accept, even were she without a chaperon."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

WHAT it calls "one of the most agreeable and unique dinners ever given in Atlanta" is thus referred to by a journal of that city: "After the soup had been served, and just prior to serving the next course, the host gave his signal and rose from his seat, as did every other gentleman at the table, all the ladies remaining seated. Each gentleman then moved to the next gentleman's seat to his right. When this was first done the ladies, not being let into the secret, were very much surprised at the unusual conduct of the gentlemen, and could not at once comprehend the meaning of it; but when they gathered its full intent, and the charm there was in it, it was decidedly gratifying to note the merriment and interest with which they received the innovation. The idea was accounted a perfect success by all.

Scientific and Useful.

PILOT ENGINES.—Austrian engineers speak favorably of a new pilot engine for preventing railway collisions. It is worked by electricity, under the control of the engineer, and is run at any desired distance in front of the train, which it stops automatically on encountering any obstacle.

TO EXTRACT GREASE.—Equal parts of strong ammonia-water, ether, and alcohol form a valuable cleaning compound. Pass a piece of blotting-paper under the grease spot, moisten a sponge first with water to render it "greedy," then with the mixture, and rub the spot with it. In a moment it is dissolved, saponified, and absorbed by the sponge and blotter.

BUOYS.—The Lighthouse Board is about to undertake the lighting of buoys which mark dangerous points in our rivers and harbors by electricity. The present method consists in supplying them with oil or gas, which entails much trouble and expense in replenishing them. Lighted by electricity they would be at all times under control.

TO LOOSEN A TIGHT STOPPER.—Apply hot water to the neck of the bottle, when will expand, while the stopper retains its former temperature and becomes loose. In the case of a phial containing smelling salts, dip the neck and stopper in vinegar or a solution of citric acid. Then place the phial in a vessel of hot water, when the stopper will readily come out.

PAPER BOTTLES.—The manufacture of paper bottles is said to be becoming an important industry at Chicago. These paper bottles, which can be made all shapes and sizes, are cheaper than those made of glass or other material. The bottles are unbreakable, and require no packing in transit. For various purposes, such as the carriage of ink, blacking, varnishes, and paints, these bottles will doubtless be found useful; but for wines, spirits, medicines, etc., glass, which has the advantage of transparency and great cleanliness, is likely to hold its own.

CUTTING A BOTTLE.—The following is said to be a good plan to cut a bottle: "Put the bottle on a level foundation and fill up with oil as far as you wish the line of separation to be. Next get a rod of iron as large as possible, but small enough to go into the mouth of the bottle. Make the iron almost white hot and dip it into the oil. In a very short time the sound of a crack will be heard, when the iron can be taken out, and the bottle will be found as neatly cut as if with a diamond. Should the bottle be very thick and the sound of the crack not heard in a minute or so, a dash of cold water outside will settle the business."

Farm and Garden.

THISTLES.—An Austrian farmer finds that thistles, which infest his lands make ensilage that the cattle eat readily.

EARLY CHICKS.—The best food for early hatched chicks is granulated oatmeal, which should be placed in little troughs, so that the chicks can get all they wish at any time.

HORN SIGNALS.—It is suggested that farmers whose neighbors are at a distance establish horn signals among themselves for protection against burglars and to be used in cases of emergency.

THE SPRING.—Although this is the winter season, in this latitude there is but a short time before spring work should begin, and all the work done now would be of great advantage when the hurry shall begin.

VICIOUS HABITS.—Animals of vicious habits should never be used for breeding purposes, as vices are transmitted. By careful breeding in this respect the dispositions of the animals can be partially controlled.

AGAINST FIRE.—Use every precaution to avoid fire. Have a convenient peg for each lantern in use in the barn, and never place a light where it may accidentally set fire to anything. Be careful in leaving hot ashes around.

DUMB BRUTES.—The one-sided way of expecting dumb animals to understand the owner and conform to his rules is disappearing before the more sensible course, in which the owner studies carefully the wants and desires of the animal and endeavors to meet them intelligently.

SKINNING ANIMALS.—In skinning animals that have died of disease too much care cannot be exercised. If there be any sore or abrasion of the skin, whereby the poisonous disease may come in contact with the blood of the individuals, results endangering life are liable to be produced.

WITH CARE.—The real destructive agent in Paris green and London purple is arsenic. Although these articles may be safely handled, yet they should be used carefully. Animals or fowls that eat food over which they may have been dusted, or eat portions that may have dropped, will either die or be made very sick. The articles should always be labelled to avoid mistakes.

MANAGEMENT.—Deep plowing, subsoiling, and underdraining are excellent precautions against drought. Subsoiling is of no advantage unless assisted by good drainage, and the deep tillage not only carries off the surplus water during wet spells but supplies moisture during drought periods by capillary attraction of the soil, as well as allowing the roots of the plants to penetrate deeper.

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Hoping and Waiting.

The normal state of man is waiting—of which the other name is hope, and the converse, endeavor. It is always waiting with us, from the cradle to the grave—always that looking for something that has to come—always that reaching out to something that has to be won.

Almost all of us live more in the future than the present. To the healthy mind the future has always the treasure to which the present holds the keys.

When we think of the future we think of it as if we should go to bed one day as such and such and wake up the next morning as what we are aiming to be; as if there was none of that wearing away of the sharp edges of desire by the gradual preparation which comes by time and endeavor.

Time is of all things the most variable, and no two hours measure true. When we are waiting for a pleasure he lags limping and fettered. When we are waiting for a coming pain he flies like a swallow, and the minutes are gone before you have time to count them.

On the brink of an important meeting, how full are those beats which mete out the hour! Short or long, each minute is as full of life as are whole days of smaller meaning, and we live at greater speed and with more passionate expenditure of feeling.

All artistic workers pass their lives in waiting. Their whole existence is one of endeavor and the future; for no sooner is one thing finished and flung into the world to be slaughtered by ferocious critics, or chilled to death by tepid praise, or haply ignored altogether, than another is begun; and before the first book or picture is appraised and judged the second fills the whole mental horizon of the worker.

It is always to-morrow that has to come. To-day is so short, so unmeaning, so poor! The highest level has never been reached. It is always to be reached—always that waiting for supreme success and the zenith! If it were not so, and if the artist in paints or sounds or words were satisfied, and considered his work complete and perfect, we should have no improvement, and the waiting would be for infinite degradation.

Some of us wait for all time for the recognition we think we merit, and the world will not accord. Whether we know best or the world is a question which will never be decided to our own satisfaction; for if we are great, and they are unable to see our greatness, the consciousness of unappreciated merit is by no means a pleasant possession. It may be a salve, but the wound is there all the same; and the sense of injustice is always as a thorn going deeper and deeper into the quivering flesh. If they are wiser than we, and we all our lives have dwelt in a fool's paradise, what pitiful humiliation should the moment come when we open our eyes and see the cheat we have made for ourselves!

We wait for all things—for love to ripen, for enmity to pass—haply for enmity felt by and not for ourselves to find an opportunity for that blow so much desired!—for friendship to mature—for the cloud of misunderstanding to clear itself away. We wait for the marriage which is to make the fortune of one we love and be the eternal barrier between him and us—for the child that is to cement a union with the holiest and strongest cement known to man—for the death by which we are to inherit—for the day which brings us to a friend's house and for the day which takes us back to our own home—we are always waiting and never attaining, save by fragments and when desire is blunted.

This, indeed, is the tragedy of life. Truly, "all comes to him who knows how to wait." But for how many does it not come too late?

If you are heartily sorry for misspent years, you will make it your business to spend your future years wisely. If you are called to renounce an undevout heart, the same Lord calls you to work with holy hands. In whatever the past has been irreligious and mean, the future must be sanctified and noble. Despising your selfishness, you must go on to generosity. Renouncing a paltry ambition, you must serve humanity and truth for their own immortal sake. The invisible energy that makes the acorn vital is nothing, unless you give it soil and air for growth and expansion into the fair proportions of the oak. Thus, in fact, reformation becomes the test of repentance, proving its sincerity and its worth.

It is a good thing for a young man to be "knocked about in the world," though his soft-hearted parents may not think so. All youths, or, if not all, certainly nineteen-twentieths of the sum total, enter life with a surplusage of conceit. The sooner they are relieved of it the better. If, in measuring themselves with wiser and older men than they are, they discover that it is unwarranted, and get rid of it gracefully of their own accord, well and good; if not, it is desirable for their own sakes that it be knocked out of them.

When a pump is frequently used, the water pours out at the first stroke, because it is high; but if the pump has not been used for a long time, the water gets low, and when you want it you must pump a long while; and the water comes only after great efforts. It is so with prayer. If we are instant in prayer, every little circumstance awakens the disposition to pray, and desire and words are always ready; but if we neglect prayer, it is difficult for us to pray, for the water in the well gets low.

What the Lord means by repentance is just the act of breaking through, from nature's limits and darkness, into the marvellous light and liberty of life in God. Therefore said He, "Except you repent"—unless you break through and beyond the gate of your natural life, the doom of all nature's generations hangs over you—you are perishing men. Breaking through, you meet the dawn of an endless future, the infinite sphere of God's presence opens before you, you touch the edge of your unutterable joy.

It would truly be a fine thing if men suffered themselves to be guided by reason, that they should acquiesce in the true remonstrances addressed to them by the writings of the learned and the advice of friends. But the greater part are so disposed that the words which enter by one ear do incontinently go out of the other, and begin again by following the custom. The best teacher one can have is necessity.

Every breach of faith, every broken promise, every mean advantage taken, however small and trifling each may appear, helps to build up the dishonesty which at some time, and by some one, wrecks the happiness of multitudes and drags down the sinning one to degradation and ruin. The honor of the country and the integrity of the nation are in the hands of every citizen; each is responsible for his share in making or in marring them.

Sin casts dirt in our faces, and besmears and befouls us, but after repentance may a man say as Nebuchadnezzar did of himself after his restoring: "At the same time was my glory and my beauty restored unto me." So at the time of our repentance the shame and the deformity which sin brought upon us is taken away, and our glory and our beauty is restored unto us, which we had before we sinned.

Surely no man can reflect, without wonder, upon the vicissitudes of human life arising from causes in the highest degree accidental and trifling. If you trace the necessary concatenation of human events a very little way back, you may perhaps discover that a person's very going in or out of a door has been the means of coloring with misery or happiness the remaining current of his life.

Do not say to children, "Be good," but make them find pleasure in being so; develop within their hearts the germ of sentiments that nature has placed there. Give them opportunities of being truthful, liberal, compassionate; rely on the human heart; leave those precious seeds to bloom in the air which surrounds them; do not stifle them under a quantity of frames and networks.

Would you judge of the lawfulness or unlawfulness of pleasures, take this rule: Whatever weakens your reason impairs the tenderness of your conscience, obscures your sense of God, or takes off the relish of spiritual things; in short, whatever increases the strength and authority of your body over your mind, that thing is sin to you, however innocent it may be in itself.

Relaxation is a physical and moral necessity. Animals, even to the simplest and dullest, have their games, their sports, their diversions. The toil-worn artisan, stooping and straining over his daily task, which taxes eye and brain and limb, ought to have opportunity and means for an hour or two of relaxation after that task is concluded.

How easy it is for one to say a thing from which he can never fully recover himself as long as he lives. He may be sorry, and ask and receive the pardon of men, but in their estimation he is never afterward the same man he was before. "Keep thy heart with all diligence," and your tongue, too.

The best things are nearest; breath in your nostrils, light in your eyes, flowers at your feet, duties at your hand, the path of God just before you. Then do not grasp at the stars, but do life's plain, common work as it comes, certain that daily duties and daily bread are the sweet things of life.

To air theological or political opinions in presence of customers is to run the risk of losing their good will and trade and gaining nothing. Business and theology, or politics, never mix well. Each occupy separate spheres.

Do to-day's duty, fight to-day's temptation, and do not weaken and distract yourself by looking forward to things which you can not see, and could not understand if you saw them.

When we pray for any virtue, we should cultivate the virtue as well as pray for it; the form of your prayers should be the rule of your life; every petition to God is a precept to man.

To accomplish a duty is to diffuse joy; and as every moment of life holds a duty, it depends upon us to surround ourselves with unceasing joy.

Of all mental gifts, the rarest is intellectual patience; and the last lesson of culture is to believe in difficulties which are invisible to ourselves.

A good heart is the sun and moon, or, rather, the sun and not the moon; for it shines bright and never changes, but keeps its course truly.

We are forced to respect the gifts of nature, which neither fortune nor study can give.

The World's Happenings.

Schley county, Georgia, has a hen that only lays on Sundays.

The doctors of Carondelet, Mo., have adopted the silk hat as a uniform.

A tramp was lately sold in Missouri for 35 cents for a six months' work contract.

A Dover New Hampshire woman has just bought the street railroad system of that city.

A couple who had been "engaged" for thirty years were married this week at Jamaica, L. I.

A new sled, weighing 1700 pounds and seating 22 persons, has been built for the Niagara Coasting Club.

Santa Cruz, Cal., has witnessed the novel sight of a man standing in the snow and picking grapes in a vineyard.

Pope Leo's jubilee gifts are estimated at $18,000,000 in value. His Holiness received no less than 41,000 chasubles.

Nelson Cardwell, a colored man, died in Greensboro, N. C., recently, from the effects of a spider bite on the neck.

Four sheep and ten bushels of wheat settled an Iowa breach of promise suit where $25,000 damages were demanded.

The colored people propose to hold a national convention in Washington to urge a national emancipation holiday.

A low estimate puts the number of persons supported by all the forms of employment furnished by electricity at 5,000,000.

The assignees of a suspended Missouri bank found only a solitary nickel in the vaults when they assembled to count the assets.

A shop in the Italian city of Bari, on the Adriatic, bears this sign: "Leeches, bread sold in slices or loaves, and tuition in mathematics."

In the City of Mexico this season $350,000 has been spent in fitting up the six rings where the bull-fighters do their little deeds of daring.

North Carolina is a State without cities. Wilmington, its largest town, has only 13,000 people; Raleigh, 13,000; Charlotte, 9000, and Ashville, 9000.

Sportsmen in the vicinity of Washington, Pa., indulged in a rat hunt recently, and at its close counted up 6300 tails as trophies of their success.

Will Mowbray, of Spring Creek, Ill., has an extraordinary dog, which has a mania for candy. The animal will eat pounds of it and whine for more.

Henry Ostrun, a lumberman of Brainherd, Minn., recently murdered his wife and seven children because, as he said, he feared they would freeze to death.

Eli Boggs and Miss Rhoda Smith and Marion Greenhill and Miss Kate Chandler walked from Carter county, Ky., to Maysville, a distance of 100 miles, to be married.

The following novel advertisement recently appeared in a New York paper: "Wanted—A young horse to exchange for a family monument (granite). Address Family Monument,——N. J.

Hastings, Neb., enjoys the distinction of having a Bootblacks' Union, which holds regular meetings for the transaction of business. A member who "cuts" union prices is promptly blacklisted.

A gentleman living near Winterville broke the knob off one of his doors, and for the want of something better he put a coffin handle on the door, and now there is not a negro in the county who will open the door.

The Piute Indians, who delight in a diet of grasshoppers in summer, are just now feasting on rabbits and "pine-nut soup." The latter is made of nuts and rabbits, and the Piutes declare it makes them "heap fat."

In a court in New York recently a gray-haired grandfather, an honored member of the bar of that city, appeared as counsel for his grandson. The youth, who had filched a diamond pin, was sent to the Elmira Reformatory.

A London firm advertises second-hand sermons, "slightly damaged, 3 shillings per hundredweight; assorted, 7 shillings per hundredweight; hand-picked, splendid value, durable, 12 shillings per hundred weight."

The negroes in Key West, Fla., not to be outdone by the Cuban and white residents of the city, both of whom have fire companies, are preparing to purchase a fire engine, to be manned exclusively by members of their race.

The Fire Marshal of a Western city wanted an ax, costing about $1. His communications to the Council relating to the matter were printed in the official paper, and the expense to the city before he got the ax was $6.80.

Nebraska has some thieves who are not altogether devoid of conscience. Several of them broke into a barn near East Nebraska City, and, after selecting a good fat porker, slaughtered it, leaving half for the owner, while the rest they carried off.

Two brothers living near Harrodsburg, Ky., look very much alike. It said that one of them joined the Baptist church, and was about to be immersed, when he found that he had no clothes suitable for the occasion. He then paid his brother 10 cents to be baptized in his place.

Enterprising farmers in Nebraska, who, with an eye to business, give corn husking parties during the summer for the young folks, have now hit upon a winter form of amusement. They're giving snow shovelling bees, but thus far the gentle sex have not been conspicuous with their shovels.

A trainer of animals in Paris gives the following account of the way in which he trains cats and rats to live on friendly terms. Taking a cat and a rat each by the back of the neck, he brings their heads nearer and nearer together, accustoming them gradually to each other until finally their noses meet. This practice at length seems to please them.

LIGHT IN DARKNESS.

BY PHOEBE CARY.

Do we think of the light and sunshine,
Of the blessings left us still,
When we sit and ponder darkly
And blindly o'er life's ill;
How should we dispel the shadows
Of still and deep despair,
And lessen the weight of anguish
Which every heart must bear!

The clouds may rest on the present,
And sorrow on days that are gone,
But no night is so utterly cheerless
That we may not look for the dawn;
And there is no human being,
With so wholly dark a lot,
But the heart by turning the picture
May find some sunny spot.

For, as in the days of winter,
When the snow-drifts whiten the hill,
Some birds in the air will flutter
And warble to cheer us still;
So, if we would hark to the music,
Some hope with a starry wing
In the days of our darkest sorrow
Will sit in the heart and sing.

In Danger's Maw.

BY J. B. BAKER.

WE quote the following curious story from a Lyons paper: Recently, at an hotel called La Croix d'Or, in the town of La Tour-du-Pin, in the south-east of France, a traveller, who had arrived in the evening, was on the following morning found dead in his bed.

Medical assistance was immediately summoned; the doctor pronounced that life had been extinct for several hours, and that the cause of death was apoplexy. This report, however, did not satisfy the police; one of the most celebrated physicians and surgeons of Lyons was sent for, and a strict investigation of the case was set on foot.

The Lyons doctor disagreed entirely with the opinion of his provincial confreres, and held that as the man was tall, thin, and long-necked, an apoplectic seizure was almost a physical impossibility The post-mortem examination showed all the vital organs to be healthy, and a minute analysis of the contents of the stomach failed to detect the least trace of poison; the face was purple and swollen, the eyes were blood-shot and protruding, but there were no marks of violence about the throat or neck to support the idea of strangulation, which was suggested by this condition.

A small clot of blood was found upon the brain, as though a vessel had been ruptured, and all agreed that this was the immediate cause of death, but how the vessel came to be ruptured there was no show.

A traveller who was staying at the hotel on the evening when the deceased arrived, deposed that the latter had drunk freely of cognac before retiring to rest, and that he judged him to have been a man who habitually indulged in stimulants; the slightly inflamed state of the coatings of the stomach supports this opinion.

Across both insteps was an indented livid line, on either side of which the flesh was slightly puffed; this mark did not extend to the back part of the leg, but terminated abruptly upon the ankle bone.

The doctors seem to attach considerable importance to this curious appearance, although beyond the fact that it must have been produced by pressure of some kind, they have utterly failed to find any explanation that will account for it.

This completes the medical evidence; but there are other suspicious circumstances connected with the case. The traveller, whose testimony has been previously quoted, states that the deceased informed him that he had a large sum of money in his possession, yet only a few francs were found upon the body; the lock of his portmanteau seems to have been tampered with, and its contents, chiefly wearing apparel, were in general disorder, as though they had been hurriedly turned over and not properly replaced.

No card or letter or paper of any kind can be found to give a clue to his name or address, both of which are unknown. It is with extreme reluctance that the authorities have had to assent to a verdict of death from natural causes.

The greatest excitement still prevails in the usually quiet town, where all kinds of rumors are afloat; it may be mentioned that the host and hostess of La Croix d'Or do not stand very high in the estimation of their fellow townspeople.

I read the above in the fragment of a weekly newspaper, that had been wrapped round something I had brought home with me, one winter's night, as I was sitting alone in my bachelor chambers. I had been walking against a bitter northeasterly wind for two or three hours before dinner, and the reaction effected by food, warmth, wine, and tobacco had induced such a lethargic state of indolence, that even reading was too great an exertion, and all I felt inclined to do was to puff out smoke and stare at the blazing coals.

Looking about for something to light a fresh pipe, I picked up the aforesaid fragment.

I was about to screw it up when my eye fell upon the words "A Mysterious Story." After the first few lines I grew intensely interested and read on to the end.

There was nothing very extraordinary about the story, but somehow it seized upon my imagination, and all that evening I could think of nothing else. Like the French doctors, the point that struck me most was the mark across the insteps, and I racked my ingenuity to find some plausible explanation for it.

The man met his death by foul means, and the secret lies in that mark, was my deliberate judgment.

When I went to bed my sleep was haunted by horrible dreams, in which the dead man and those livid marks were the prominent figures.

All the next day I could not get the story out of my thoughts. I related it to everybody I met, but no one except myself seemed able to perceive anything particularly mysterious about it.

For a whole week it haunted me, pursued me, and do what I would I was unable to banish this daily nightmare.

But the most vivid impressions will fade with time, and by the end of a month the mystery of La Tour-du-Pin was almost forgotten.

Six years afterwards, in the summer of 18—, after having done a pedestrian tour through the south-west and west of France, I found myself in Normandy on my way back to England.

I had inherited from my father a sleeping partnership in a commercial house which does a large trade with France, and upon arriving at Caen I found a letter from one of the partners, in which I was requested, as I was in that part of France, to run over to Rouen and call upon a certain firm with which we had been having extensive dealings.

"We have heard disquieting rumors about Messrs.——" —so ran the letter— "and they are some thousands of francs in our books; try and get the money, of which we enclose you a statement, in whole or in part; and endeavor, at the same time, to ascertain the truth or falsehood of the reports that are being circulated."

I at once took train to Rouen, where I was so successful in my diplomatic mission that I not only obtained the whole of the money referred to, but ascertained that the rumors which had alarmed my partners were malicious calumnies. Of course, had I been a man of business, I should at once have transmitted the notes through a French bank; but, being one of the most careless and unsystematic of fillers, I put them in my pocket and resumed my strolling tour.

I had walked from Orleans to Cape Finisterre, thence through Brittany into Normandy as far as Caen, where I received my summons; so, in order to complete my programme, I resolved to walk back from Rouen to Havre.

It was the end of October, and the weather, which had hitherto been delightfully genial, suddenly changed to cold, and by the time I got to Yvetot there were signs of a general break-up.

I passed the night at the dull little town which Beranger has immortalized, and to my chagrin woke up to a pouring wet morning.

I was just meditating whether it would not be better to bring my journey to an end by jumping into the next train for Dieppe, when about twelve o'clock the rain ceased and some gleams of sunshine broke through the grey sky.

Under this more favorable aspect my courage revived and I resumed my pilgrimage. But it was a task rather than a pleasure.

The roads were heavy, the atmosphere was damp, the country uninteresting.

I had not proceeded far when the sun withdrew himself altogether behind the leaden canopy; and about four o'clock the black clouds began to discharge a mixture of rain, sleet, and snow, and emphasized it by a north-west wind that promised to rise into a gale, a combination which rendered pedestrian anything but an exhilarating exercise.

A church clock was chiming the hour of six when I entered the town of ——. Weary, wet, and hungry, I was only too glad to get into the first hotel that offered accommodation.

It was one of those ancient houses, with pointed roof and white plaster walls, curiously crossed with black beams, so common in Normandy.

Passing beneath the low-browed doorway I descended a step into a wide, rambling hall or passage, which would have been in total darkness but for the light that streamed through an open door near the entrance.

The sound of my foot step brought forth a pale, sour-looking woman with a candle in her hand, who eyed me from head to foot, not without surprise, I thought, as though a guest were an unlooked-for occurrence.

Although I was not astonished that my appearance, dripping with rain as I was, and as thickly bespattered with mud as a London omnibus on a November day, did not seem favorably to impress her; yet the place looked so gloomy that I hesitated whether I should not go further on. A peep, however, into the room she had quitted, which was comfortably furnished and lit up by a bright wood fire, indisposed me to turn out again into the pitiless storm, and I requested to be shown to the best bedroom that the house afforded.

Without a word, and, as I thought, rather reluctantly, she led the way up a wide oak staircase into a chamber upon the first floor, which with its white panels, polished oak floor, perfect cleanliness, and comfortable and tasteful furniture, looked so enticing to my weary eyes that I at once expressed my determination to pitch my tent there for the night.

"We charge more for this, monsieur," she said, again eyeing me doubtfully. "I can find you another room, very good, much cheaper." "This or nothing, madame," I interrupted; and to assure her of my ability to pay, notwithstanding my disreputable appearance, I brought out my pocket-book, which was crammed with notes and gold, and put a louis-d'or into her hand. I saw her face light up at the sight of my book, and in a moment she was overwhelming me with apologies for her hesitation. 'But "La Croix d'Or" is a hotel of repute, and we are very particular whom we receive, and I am sure monsieur will not blame us for that."

It was with some difficulty I got her out of the room. Her affability impressed me even less favorably than did her previous sullenness.

As soon as I had changed my clothes from my knapsack I went downstairs and found my hostess waiting to conduct me into the dining-room, where a fire was kindled and the table was already laid for the meal I had ordered.

I now discovered that I was the solitary guest, although she protested that the house was usually very full indeed. Appearances, however, did not countenance this assertion; there was one servant about, a stupid-looking country wench, and there was that indescribable air of stagnation that one always feels in a little-frequented inn.

The dinner was served by the host himself, and he had evidently cooked it as well.

He was a man who looked forty, with straight black hair and beard and a southern type of physiognomy; there was a furtive, treacherous look in the small deep-set, glittering eyes, and a gross animalism about the heavy chin and thick under lip, that his sycophantish smile and obtrusive humility heightened rather than softened. He spoke a little, but his cringing manner was peculiary repulsive to me.

Madame was equally servile in her way, and servility so ill suited her hard features and greedy-looking eyes, that the effect was equally disagreeable.

I begged them to serve my soup and chicken and omelette, of which my meal consisted, at the same time, as I desired to be alone, and I felt it quite a relief when the ill-looking pair quitted the room. The meal, however, was excellent and I did justice to it.

When I had finished, I lit a cigar and turned round to enjoy a comfortable smoke by the fire.

Feeling a little shivery and tearful of a cold, I rang the bell for some cognac, hoping that a servant might answer the summons. But no, to my intense disgust, there was Madame with her grinning sinister face, and a thousand inquiries as to whether Monsier liked the potage and the roti and the omelette, and with dissertations upon the cooking of "La Croix d'Or;" then the merits of the cognac were descanted upon, it was Fin champagne thirty years old. At last, with the aid of the girl I have before mentioned, the table was cleared and I was once more alone.

"What is there associated in my mind with the sign of 'La Croix d'Or?'" I asked myself, as soon as the woman's irritating jabber had ceased to ring in my ears.

It was some time before my memory went back as far as the night on which I read the paragraph in the "Weekly Dispatch," and remembered that was the sign of the inn at which that mysterious death had place. But that was up in the south-east, hundreds of miles away, and no sign is more common throughout France than "La Croix d'Or."

Every one knows how easy it is to build up a series of coincidences and link together a chain of suspicious circumstances when the mind is irritated or depressed. I thought of the villainous-looking landlord and his scarcely less ill-looking wife, of the peculiar solitude and gloom of the house; the man's face I had remarked was of a southern type; what if he were—— here I grew angry with myself and swallowed a good draught of brandy-and-water.

What ailed me? Well, the dreariness of the day and my long walk through such abominable weather were quite sufficient to account for any amount of depression; no doubt an incipient cold was upon me. I mixed another glass of cognac, and tried to persuade myself that I had reasoned away my megrims, but the next moment I was muttering, "I wish she hadn't seen my pocket-book."

After that I threw away my cigar, jumped up, and rang for a candle, though with a positive dread of that sallow face and those greedy eyes.

As I rose I felt that I had not swallowed two stiff tumblers of brandy-and-water with impunity. That man, it was supposed, was a little inebriated when he went to bed, I thought.

My bugbear answered the summons and, spite of my brusque declaration that I did not require her guidance, insisted upon showing me to my room, and singing the praises of the bed, which according to her description was the softest and finest in all France. Taking the light from her hand I almost thrust her out and locked the door.

"Thank heaven I am free of her to-night," I exclaimed inwardly. My copious draughts had not succeeded in raising my depression or even in dispelling those chilly, shivery sensations which I feared were harbingers of a cold, and they had superadded a strong disposition to a splitting headache.

Bad liquor, I thought. Or perhaps it was drugged? Again I tried to get angry with my nervous fancies, but the attempt was not successful.

Before retiring to bed I resolved thoroughly to examine the room. I began with the door; that was satisfactory enough; it was strong and had a good lock, and a bolt as well, both of which I made secure. No person could enter that way without awakening me.

I next turned my attention to the window; it was deep set with a heavy frame and small panes of glass, and was fastened by means of one of those iron bolts, working in a socket and with a heavy horizontal handle, which are commonly used in France.

I opened it to endeavor to discover the lookout; but the night was so intensely dark, and the rain descending in such torrents, that I could perceive nothing but a black gulf.

Having made the window thoroughly secure again, my next care was to ascertain that there was no second entrance to the room. I examined the walls and the back of a large closet which was situated near the bed, but without finding anything suspicious.

Lastly, I turned my attention to the bed itself.

I remarked that it stood unusually high from the floor, and that instead of valances the lower part was encased with polished wood, which also formed a framework for the bed to rest in.

It was thus impossible for any one to lie concealed underneath. From a canopy above the head depended heavy curtains, the thick folds of which half enclosed it as a tent.

Now, I never could endure bed curtains of any kind, as they have always a stifling effect upon me.

These were too firmly fixed to be pulled down, and I knew that to lie with my head beneath them would be to half asphyxiate myself; there was but one alternative, and that was to shift the pillows from the top to the bottom.

As soon as this change was effected I undressed and turned in.

I did not find my couch answer to my hostess's eulogies, on the contrary it was singularly hard and unyielding; but I was

so tired and so drowsy that recollection faded almost as soon as my head touched the pillow.

I think I must have been asleep some time before I began to dream. Then I thought that I was once more examining the room, trying the door, the window, feeling the walls for any secret entrance, but as I approached the bed I found that it was already occupied; a man's head was lying back upon the bolster, a dead face was upturned towards mine, which, as I stood gazing upon it, assumed the likeness of the landlord of the hotel; the straight black hair straggled over the lived skin and clung to the dank forehead; the eyes were fixed and glassy, and stared horribly; the jaw had dropped, but the sycophantish smile was stamped even in death upon the hideous mouth.

While I stood gazing like one spell-bound, I saw the corpse gradually rising to a sitting posture, not as though by any volition of its own, but with a perfectly rigid movement, as though impelled by a machine.

All of a moment I felt its arms coiled around my chest like the folds of a serpent. I could scarcely draw a breath; I struggled to free myself, though I knew that no strength could avail against that deadly embrace; then, as though still by some invisible agency, we began slowly to rise into the air; the room, the bed, every object faded into darkness, all was a black void, and we seemed floating away into infinite space.

I uttered a cry and awoke. I knew I was awake, but the nightmare was on me still, for I could feel the pressure upon my chest and the strange upward motion as plainly as I had felt it in my sleep.

I tried to move, but I found myself fixed to the bed, so firmly that I could not stir hand or foot.

Was it merely the after-effect of my dream, or was I really being raised to a perpendicular position?

I could doubt it no longer. Slowly and smoothly the foot, or rather the head, of the bed—for it will be remembered that I reversed for my own convenience—dipped, while the opposite end rose; at the same time I could feel thick folds gathering round my feet.

The horror of the situation was greatly heightened by the intense darkness and by the awful silence.

When I had been brought to a standing position, though without my feet touching the ground, the motion ceased. And did I not cry for help?

At first my bewilderment, my doubt as to whether I was sleeping or waking, held me tongue-tied; and as thought once more began to circulate through my brain, I knew that I was caught in some snare, and that my cry would bring no assistance, but perhaps the assassin.

What the agony of that time was like, only the man who, full of health and strength, has suddenly been brought face to face with Death, can realize. I knew that I was doomed, and each second I expected to hear a stealthy footstep creeping towards me and to feel a murderous grasp upon my throat. But what need of these elaborate devices?

Why, if murder were intended, was I not despatched in my sleep? Minutes elapsed, nothing further happened, and I could hear the pouring rain without, but no other sound.

Almost the first thought that came to my waking mind was the story of the mysterious death at La Tour-du-Pin.

I understood the situation in a moment. I had fallen into a similar snare; or, rather, I should have done so had I not reversed the position of my head.

Yet how extraordinary, how utterly unreal such a coincidence was! But for the physical pain that was too acute to be imaginary, I could not have believed it was other than a nightmare.

I continue to endure without a struggle, on the supposition that my life depended upon the assassins believing that their murderous plot had succeeded.

How long it was before relief came I cannot judge, but after a lapse of what seemed to me hours I felt the bed gradually moving back to a horizontal position. Then the pressure slackend upon my chest and legs, I felt the cords slide away, and I was once free.

The worst of the danger was now over, but not all; truly I had the use of my arms and legs and could fight for my life; but these people would be desperate at the idea of their diabolical plan being discovered, and the odds in such a fight would be terribly against me.

I must keep cool and not yield to panic. It was still quite dark, yet I feared to strike a light, and after groping for my clothes and dressing myself I sat down in a chair and waited for the dawn.

Can I ever forget the horror of that vigil! Surrounded by an impenetrable blackness, over which brooded the phantom of murder; scarcely daring to breathe lest I should betray myself to some stealthy listener; fancying every moment that I could hear creeping footsteps; that I could feel an invisible presence; that I could see shadows moving across the darkness, and outstretched hands making for my throat! Would the dawn never break?

It came at last, wan and ghastly as the face of my dream; but never had the most glorious sunrise been so grateful to my eyes as was the gleam of cold grey light that broke at last through the shroud of darkness that enveloped me.

I advanced on tiptoe to the window and cautiously peered through the glass. I could see that it was at least twenty feet from the ground, and looked into a paved yard with high walls.

That way was hopeless. If I attempted to leave the room I might find the assassin lurking on the stairs. The safest plan would be to wait until later; until the doors of the house were open; until people were about the streets, and there would be a chance of assistance, should I need it.

I looked at my watch, it was past seven o'clock. Just then I heard some one stirring below, a door open and shut. While I stood listening with my ear to the keyhole my attention was attracted by another sound; it came from beneath the bedstead, and might have been the gnawing of a rat.

Fixing my eyes upon the spot whence the noise proceeded, I presently saw a portion of the wooden casing that enclosed the bottom of the bedstead move away, and the next moment the space was filled up by a head covered with long black hair and a white ghastly face shaded by a stubbly black beard; the morning light was still dim and the room full of shadows, but that livid face started out of its dark framework with terrible distinctness.

I could not stir, a very fascination of horror seized upon me. Our eyes met; I could see the pupils of the other dilate, the mouth open, and almost the very hair stir with terror.

For seconds we fixed one another thus. Then I heard a cry and the head was gone, and I heard a scratching and a scrambling.

I could endure no more; without even waiting to put on my hat I turned the key, shot back the bolt, opened the door, and sprang down the stairs.

The girl was sweeping out the hall—the outward door was open—I rushed past her into the streets, and ran at headlong speed until I reached the centre of the town.

As soon as I recovered my breath I sought the bureau of the police, and told my extraordinary story.

From my strange appearance and excited manner I am sure they took me for a madman; but nevertheless I prevailed upon them to allow a couple of gensdarmes to accompany me back to the hotel. Yet brief as had been the time thus taken up, it had been sufficient to allow the criminals to escape.

The examination of the premises, however, quickly revealed the infernal machinery to which I had so nearly fallen a victim.

The chamber I had occupied was built over what had formerly been a coach-house, but which was now used as a lumber-shed. Between the ceiling of this place and the floor of the room was a loft about three feet high, also apparently filled with lumber, but in reality it was only the entrance that was stopped up, the rest of the place was perfectly clear, and it was from here the machinery was worked.

The pallet of my bedstead was simply a wooden plank secured to the framework only in the centre, where it was made to revolve to any angle by means of an iron rod that acted as an axis.

It was supported at either end by two iron legs attached to the floor but not to the plank; that portion of the flooring that was beneath the upper half of the bedstead could be sunk like a stage trap into the loft, so as to admit of the pallet being raised from the horizontal to the perpendicular; cords cunningly reeled into the quilt were passed through the flooring into the loft and thence into the coach-house below, and worked by small windlasses, which enabled the operator to secure the helpless victim to the bed.

The rush of blood caused by the head hanging downwards, more especially after a man had been partaking of a drugged drink, was almost certain to produce apoplexy, more especially as the curtains were so arranged that they closely enfolded the victim's head and rendered breathing almost impossible.

Some few months afterwards the man was arrested.

In the meantime it was discovered that he had been the landlord of "La Croix d'Or" at La Tour-du-Pin at the time of the traveller's mysterious death.

He afterwards made a full confession of his crimes; at least, he owned to having committed six murders in the manner I have described, and would probably have committed as many more but for my miraculous escape.

Without some such chance, detection was almost impossible; there was no trace of blood, or poison, no mark of violence, and nothing to suggest the mode by which the crime had been committed.

After the suspicions aroused at La Tour du-Pin, however, he had thought it better for the future to make away with the bodies of his victims; four nearly consumed by quicklime were found in the garden of the Norman Hotel.

But an evil reputation had begun to cling about the house, the town's people avoided it and travellers fought shy of it, which I could very well understand as only the exceptional weather would have induced me to enter its gloomy portals.

I may remark, in conclusion, that it was only by accident I escaped exchanging asphyxia for strangulation.

In my sleep I had pushed down the bed clothes, otherwise the cord which was intended to secure my feet would have been across my throat instead of across my chest.

LATELY an interesting family arrived in Boston en route for Lowell. It was that of Mr. B. Staveley, of England, a farmer, and consisted of himself and wife, with 12 children, whose ages are as follows: 28, 18, 16, 15, 14, 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 4 years and 11 months, Mr. and Mrs. Staveley's ages being respectively 44 and 43 years. All of the children but the last three are boys.

The Last Jester.

BY J. CASSELL.

THE room of the Lady Lucrece was full of coolshadows, though it was mid-summer, and the purple-bordered linens at the windows swayed in the hot wind.

There were purple bordered linens, too, on the couch where the lady Lucrece lay—one cannot do much at the noontide in Pisa when it is mid-summer. The heavens seemed to hang down near to the languorous earth; a palpitant white heat shimmered in the streets; the lazaroni slept; at the bath houses the attendants went about in shifts of linen; the shops and stores were silent; it was too hot even to hate.

If one had a vengeance to take he waited till nightfall, when he should be cooler. And the Lady Lucrece, fragrant from her bath, lay on her couch amid the fresh linens.

As the long day wasted itself in languid hours the lady smiled, although it was not her wont.

"How many hours till midnight?" she asked her maid.

"Six and more, gracious mistress," replied the maid, drowsily; and she wiped her forehead.

"Ah," sighed the Lady Lucrece, "bring in Massimiliani."

A moment later a queer, halting step was heard on the tiled floor in the hall outside. The curtains at the door were of the green which the sea has in the morning. They parted and Massimiliani stood between them.

Had nature had her way he would have been tall, but some mysterious force had bent him almost double, and his humped shoulders and heavy head hung always towards the earth.

He was not merely grotesque: he was hideous. There are men whom nature has jested with; Massimiliani she had cursed.

He made a salutation with his hands—he could bend no lower.

"I am for ever bowing," he said to his mistress. "My grace was so great the first time I had occasion to make a salute to a lady that I was never allowed to rise."

"Who was the lady?" queried his mistress, shutting her eyes as he stood before her.

"The only woman whom I shall ever kiss—Mother Earth." He looked straight down at the Lady Lucrece.

"I do not want gibes this afternoon," said his mistress.

"Then my gracious lady did not send for me?"

Massimiliani spread out his huge dark hands and smiled.

"Send for you? Yes, I sent for you."

"It cannot be. You have forgotten. For what am I but a gibe? It cannot be a question of wisdom, or it would not lie between a woman and a fool. Perhaps it was a matter of grace and you want me to dance, or a matter of beauty and you wish me to smile, or a question of sweet sounds and you wish me to sing."

The Lady Lucrece sat up and put the damp hair back from her brow.

"I had sooner hear a chorus of ravens," she said, but she laughed as she said it. No one minded Massimiliani, and she pulled at the end of his long, hanging sleeve to make him squat upon the floor by her feet, which he did with a mocking gesture.

"Princes have been here before me," said he.

The lady looked haughty, but she was not ill-pleased.

"It does relate to singing," said she.

Massimiliani leaped to his feet and seized some roses that lay at the foot of the couch.

"The flowers!" he cried, and flung them from the casement.

His mistress stared at him in amazement.

"From the Lord Ascanio," she replied, mechanically.

"There was a tarantula among them. Are you so good, madam, that your lovers must send you to heaven?"

"Fool!" cried the lady, angrily; "there was no tarantula among the roses."

Massimiliani sat down again upon the floor.

"Go on with your tale," said he; "I am no greater fool than I was before."

The Lady Lucrece sat pondering, with her elbows on her knees and her flushed cheek in her hands.

"Fool," said the Lady Lucrece, and her breath came faster, "you have not heard, have you——"

"Heaven gave me straight ears, the saints be thanked!" the jester sardonically interrupted.

"——Night after night, since the summer came, a voice below my window? It always comes when the shadow of the balcony hides his figure."

"That he may not see your face if you lean out, and so lose his inspiration?" interjected the dwarf.

The lady struck him on the head with her jewelled hand. The blow was light, but the dwarf shivered.

"The voice," said he, "what was it like?"

The lady fell back again in her old attitude.

The flowing sleeves drooped from her arms. The loose strings of pearls with which they were wreathed tumbled down to her elbows.

Massimiliani spread himself flat upon the floor, and, bracing his heavy head against his hands, watched her as a tiger watches his prey.

"Ah, fool! I think you know I never loved. Men are so little, I could rule them all; I do not want a man that I can rule. But his voice—it sings of war, of great deeds, terrible and grand. And yet, Massimiliani, it sings of love—of love which counts power and money and name as nothing. It does not sue for love; it demands it as a right. The verses which he sings are no other man's; they are his own, and he weaves them as he sings. He does not mind that I am great; he loves me for my soul, he loves me for my pride, for my will, for my scorn of petty things. He knows me as I am. He is the first living creature who has ever done so. It mounts—this voice—up to my lattice like a vine. It runs through gay melodies like rippling water. It grows as sad as the voice of the night bird. I weep when it sings of death; I throw up my arms and walk the room, strong as a giant, when it sings of war; and when it sings of love, fool, I bury my face in my arms and blush. All day I lie and dream of it, and in my sleeping dreams at night I hear naught but it. I dream how we shall meet and where. I am sure he must be beautiful."

A sound from the man at her feet caused her to stop.

The fool had rolled on his back in a convulsion of laughter, and the tears trickled down his cheeks.

"Fool!" cried the lady, springing from the couch in anger.

"Holy Virgin!" exclaimed the dwarf. "Will the eternal snows melt and the desert blossom? Will the tower fall? Shall I be straight? Will Heaven take pity? Will my lady love?"

He threw his jangling punchinello at her feet and tore his cap from his head. "Wear them," he cried, "my baubles and my cap! I never cracked so excellent a jest."

"I will marry him alone who knows my soul, and shows it me in song. I sent for you that you might do me some service."

"Ay, for the scorn of fifteen years, which you have given me?"

"Have you not given me back scorn for scorn?"

"At least to-day I have made you forget that we are not equals. You are defending yourself against me, mistress—against your slave!"

"Leave me! To-morrow, mind, at night when my friends are with me, I shall find who sang those songs, and I will be his wife and none but his. You think I cannot love? I have known none but fools, though they were not all as ugly as you. Out of my sight! I do not need your aid."

The fool with his head hanging and his eyes rolling, threw up his hands with a frantic gesture and rushed from the room.

The day passed. Evening came, and, later, the moonlight. Under the balcony the shadows were heavy.

The Lady Lucrece walked in the chamber where the candles stood dark in their silver sconces, and only the moon lit the white marble which her garments swept. She waited long; the voice did not come. The moon reached the west, and still the lady paced the floor.

At length the longed-for melody—pure, vaulting, triumphant—burst into a song of victory and love; but ere it had sung a score of words it was choked into silence. A sound arose to the lady's ears of passionate weeping; there was a discordant jangle of the lute as though a disregardful hand had brushed it heavily, and the night wore on in silence.

The next day no one saw the jester Massimiliani nor the Lady Lucrece till it was night—a festal night—and the stately apartments were ablaze with light.

Never had Pisa known such a festival. Liberty reigned in hall and hovel, and the Lady Lucrece was the central figure of the festival. She sat at the end of a hall on a dais.

Robes of azure silk fell all about her; jewels looped up her hair, glittered on her arms, clasped her white neck, and shone in the fastening of her slippers. About her were flowers, perfume, light, music, men who were courtly, women who were beautiful.

There were marbles, carvings, tapestries, statues, and fountains.

But the deep fire in the eyes of the Lady Lucrece did not catch its inspiration from any of these things. It was midnight when she ordered the music to stop.

She had been dancing, and all the sensuous rhythm of the motion seemed impersonated in her. She went back to the dais and stood there, young and fair, in the shadow of the ancient carvings.

A look of maidenliness, unwonted in her spread itself over her face. She came of tyrants, and the blood of the tyrant was in her; but now she looked as gentle as any maid that ever begged her lover for another kiss.

"I have sworn an oath," said she, "and to-night I must keep it. The people of Pisa have long wished me to take a lord, but I have found none whom I desired. But for many nights some one has sung beneath my window. I do not know the man, but my soul is wedded to the voice, and I will marry him alone who can prove to me to-night that it is his."

Her hauteur had returned. She was again the daughter of a line of dukes.

No one replied or moved. The lady spoke again—

"Surely he need not fear; he may trust me." She waited still; a woman's tremors came back to her. "He must have loved me," she cried; "it was the voice of love. Let me but look on him who sang those songs to me."

She held out her arms. The jewels on her bosom rose and fell. She seemed half sinking beneath the tremulous agitation. Suddenly from behind the back of that great chair upon the dais there sprang Massimiliani, the hideous jester.

"It was I!" he cried; "it was I!"

A murmur, half wrathful, half jeering, a

bubble of laughter, surged up from the company.

"Fool!" cried the lady; "this is no time for jests."

"It was I!" he cried; "it was I!"

"Let us hear your voice!" cried a saucy little fellow of sixteen. He threw a coin towards the fool.

Massimiliani seized the coin and flung it in the young noble's face. The bent back that had never straightened seemed almost to straighten now, and a voice full of passionate sadness, yet melodious and thrilling, came out of a form which seemed to be the covering for only unclean things. It was an existing paradox, an astounding incongruity, the antithesis of facts.

And, as he sang, a hope leaped into his eyes and a triumph into his voice. Desire belongs not alone to Adonis; even a Caliban may love.

The lady's head was bowed upon her breast. The song he had chosen was the unfinished one she had listened to the night before. The humpback bent forward in hideous importunity, but the lady's face was shaded with her silken scarf.

He grew mad with a tumult of wild surmises as to what her mood might be. At length she raised her face and he saw. It was the tyrannical disdain of her race—the unspeakable contempt of a ruler for a presumptuous and menial knave—the mad mortification of an outraged woman and the chaste pique of a maiden. He saw and comprehended at a glance. He knew it was all over. The song died upon his lips. The swords of the nobles, which amazement had kept in their sheaths, were out. Massimiliani leaped towards his mistress, caught her in his arms, kissed her, and as the fierce Italians surged up to him, buried his stiletto in his breast.

So died the last jester of Pisa.

SOME DOGS.

SO many stories have been current during recent years of canine sagacity, that one is prepared to believe a great deal with regard to the doings and sensible proceedings of the "friend of man."

A curious story of this kind has lately been told by a secretary of a certain hospital. He states that the porter in charge of the entrance hall was one day lately attracted by the loud barking of a dog at the door of the hospital. He found there three dogs, one [illegible] and two [illegible] engaged [illegible] in loud barking evidently [illegible] with [illegible] dog [illegible] the latter [illegible] they ran away [illegible] was [illegible]

The injured dog had apparently cut his foot with a piece of glass, and he was traced by blood-marks to the spot where the accident happened. From this track it was clear that the animal had come by the shortest possible cut to the hospital, his two friends accompanying him to call attention to his condition.

Stories of doggies' affection are common enough; but I know of none more touching than that told by a lady, who once gave a favorite carriage dog to a friend to keep for her during her prolonged absence. For the child of the family the dog conceived one of those preferences for which dogs, above all other animals of the brute creation, have been distinguished.

He played with her, walked with her, ate by her, slept near her, followed her if she rode, and mourned inconsolably if she left home without him. It was the evil fate of this little child to contract the scarlet fever, and through all her illness the dog never left her side unless forced to do so, and then his cries were so unceasing that, for quiet's sake, he was admitted again to the sickroom.

The little girl died; and her disconsolate friend laid himself at full length beside the coffin, rising now and then to lick the cold face. When the coffin was carried from the house, he followed it; and when the small mound that covered it was raised, he resumed his watch there. No entreaties could persuade him to leave it. He never tasted food again; and in the course of nature followed his little friend—it may be beyond the confines of that mysterious hereafter, where those who love are reunited.

Lion was a huge Newfoundland, whose mistress lives in Boston, and who gives [illegible] proofs of his immense sagacity. The [illegible] is a case in point:

One day a lady called on Lion's mistress. During her call Lion came in rather slyly, [illegible] and went to [illegible] and [illegible] Lion opened one eye.

"Yes," said his mistress; "he is a very good dog, and takes excellent care of the children."

Lion opened the other eye and waved his tail complacently to and fro along the carpet.

"When the baby goes out he always goes with her, and I feel perfectly sure that then no harm can come to her," his mistress went on.

Lion's tail thumped up and down violently on the carpet.

"And he is so gentle to them all, and such a playmate and companion to them, that we would not take a thousand dollars for him."

Lion's tail now went up and down, to and fro, and round and round, with great and undisguised glee.

"But," said his mistress, "Lion has one serious fault."

Total subsidence of Lion's tail, together with the appearance of an expression of great concern on his face.

"He will come in here with his dirty feet and lie down on the carpet, when I have told him time and again that he mustn't do it."

Here Lion arose with an air of the utmost dejection and humiliation and slunk out of the room, with his lately exuberant tail totally crestfallen. Such is the story as told.

The following was related as having the merit of truth:

A gentleman in one of our suburbs owns, or did own, a fine specimen of the spaniel breed, which is very fond of children, and which, when any little ones visit his master's house, constitutes himself their companion, playmate and guardian.

A few days ago a lady with an infant visited the gentleman, and in the course of the day the child was laid on a pillow on the floor to amuse itself for a time. The dog took his place near the little one as usual. The day was hot and the flies many, and they made the baby the target of frequent attacks. This rendered her restless. Doggie watched her for a few minutes, and then, walking close up, with his nose or paw drove away every fly as soon as it lit on the baby's face, and this so gently as not to disturb her in the least.

The dog's actions attracted the attention of the mother and others, who were filled with astonishment at his sagacious kindness; but to one who has watched the dog as I have watched him, his power of observation is never surprising, however wonderful it may be, and indeed is.

The value of sheep-dogs is well known; but I believe the one whose sagacity I am now about to commemorate stands out almost alone amongst his fellows. His master is a small farmer, and the proprietor of a single cow. For him the dog acts as cowherd. Each morning the dog's dinner is tied up in paper and fastened round his neck, after which he drives the cow to pasture. He remains near the cow all day, and as nearly as possibly at mid-day he always slips the collar over his head, tears open his parcel, and eats his meal with the air of one who has earned it. Then he pushes the collar on again with his paws, and resumes his guard until dusk, when he drives the cow home. This story is vouched for by several people who have witnessed the whole "performance," and who know the dog well.

CHEATING THE CUSTOMS.

THERE are twenty women in the Customs Service of the Port of New York, about half of whom are unmarried. Their duties have reference to the examination of women suspected of having secreted valuable foreign goods about their persons, for the purpose of evading the duty required to be paid on landing in this country.

This force of twenty women is said to have become a valuable aid to the detective branch of the Custom House, although but recently organized. Their experiences are often very interesting. In speaking of the circumstances that lead to suspicion that a lady passenger is endeavoring to take something dutiable ashore, one inspector says:

"The vast majority of the women who smuggle look me calmly in the face. They have very much more nerve than men. I invariably say to the woman suspected of attempting to smuggle: 'I am afraid that you have dutiable goods on your person,' or, 'I think you have,' and you would be amazed at the assurance of their answers. [illegible] and [illegible] to examine them, and I [illegible] all to their backs, [illegible] that they [illegible] large and [illegible] ask how they [illegible] to them, and say [illegible] the latest [illegible] are."

"Some women, no matter how warm it is or how much they have under them, wear ulsters, and when I ask them if they do not wish to remove them, they graciously reply, 'Oh, no; I am quite comfortable.' Hundreds of women smugglers, in the most charming way, say that there is no use for me to examine their trunks. 'I can tell you just as well what is in that trunk,' they say. 'It is quite unnecessary for you to examine. You look tired.' They are considerate to a degree.

"They possess the quiet and careless air of millionaires, but we can always tell them by the way they sit down. The stiffness with which they use their bodies is not compatible with the graceful carriage of the head and arms, and they are immediately suspected of having goods concealed about their skirts. There is a class of women who rush immediately from the wharf to their homes, while we are talking to the staff officers. They return in an hour or so or send somebody for their trunks. Little or nothing is ever found in the trunks. The smuggling has been done by concealing [illegible] on the person, and they are quickly [illegible] at home.

"The honest woman who is accosted with the invariable suggestion, 'I think you have something you ought to declare,' stammers a trifle, is abashed, and [illegible] frankly admits that she has a few things. It is always only 'a few things,' but sometimes these are of value.

"In several of the wharves there are [illegible] examination rooms, where the [illegible] the examination is conducted in the staterooms on the steamship. It is the delicate part of the business, and very often, after I have told a woman she must permit me to examine the clothing worn by her, I go ahead and suggest that she follow me at a short distance, in order not to attract any undue attention to her.

"They think that we are simply to examine their bustles, and they don't evince much emotion. As a rule they are mighty cool. Very few cry, and I feel sorry for their predicament. I never insist that they shall take off all their clothing. I simply ask them to please take their things off. They begin with the bustle, and invariably stop there.

"I politely tell them that they must take off their dress and skirts, and you would be amazed and shocked at the easy unconcern which some of them show in divesting themselves of their clothing before a perfect stranger.

"Lace is wound around their forms inside their corsets, and with thin women the curvatures in the corsets are packed with rolls of lace. They stuff their stockings with ribbons, often creating very funny angles.

"In one case ribbons were about the limbs of a woman. Others partial to lace curtains have their skirts made of them. The bonnets with velvet fronts and plume for ornaments, when dissected, are sometimes found to contain diamonds.

"The diamonds in the plume are wrapped in black cotton. Some false heels to shoes have been discovered, and in their hollows, packed in cotton, have been found diamonds of the purest ray.

"One trick is to have skirts with pockets that will not be detected unless one's eyes are very wide open.

"The false hips to Paris dresses have turned out to be resting-places for jewelry, laces, and almost everything dear to the feminine eye.

"The enormous bustles of the smugglers are really nothing but wired enclosures for tarletan bags containing hundreds of yards of ribbons, metal trimming, crowns of bonnets, silks and gloves remind me of women who come into port with a dozen pairs or so. They can bring gloves only for their own use, and then only a reasonable number. Well, some women with three or four dozen pairs bring in sizes ranging from 5 to 7. One woman said one time that the 5's were of particularly fine quality, and would stretch to fit her, and the 7's were for the days when she had the rheumatism in her hands."

The pay of these inspectors is $3 a day, but, as a rule, they earn it well; not only on account of the peculiar and often trying nature of their work, but because they are frequently required to be at the dock early in the morning, and to remain until near midnight.

EARTH EATERS.—Baron von Humboldt says that in all tropical countries the natives show an almost irresistible desire to swallow earth; and not alkaline earths, which they might be supposed to crave in order to neutralize acid, but unctuous and strong-smelling clays.

Women on the Magdalena River, while sharpening earthern vessels on the potter's wheel, put large lumps of clay in their mouths, and it is often necessary to confine children to prevent them from running out to eat earth immediately after a fall of rain.

Humboldt, in descending the Orinoco, passed a day with the earth-eating tribe of Indians called the Otomacs, and thus describe the peculiar diet and habits of the people:—"The earth which the Otomacs eat is a soft, unctuous clay, a true potter's clay, of a yellowish grey color, due to a little oxide of iron. They seek for it on the banks of the Orinoco and Meta, and select it with care, as they do not consider all clays agreeable to eat. They knead the earth into balls of about five or six inches in diameter, which they burn or roast by a weak fire until the outside assumes a reddish tint. The balls are retouched when about to be eaten. A very intelligent monk, who had lived twelve years among the Indians, assured us that one of them would eat three-quarters of a pound to a pound and a quarter in a day. If you inquire of an Otomac about his winter provision he will point to a heap of clay balls stored in his hut."

After mentioning other instances, Humboldt concludes as follows:—

"We find the practice of eating earth diffused throughout the torrid zone, but accounts have come from the north according to which hundreds of cartloads of earth containing infusoria are said to be annually consumed by the country people in the most remote parts of Sweden, and that in Finland a kind of earth is occasionally mixed with bread."

The Peruvians, according to Noblina, eat a sweet-smelling clay, the inhabitants of Guinea mingle clay with their bread, and the negroes of Jamaica are said to eat earth when other food is deficient.

According to Labillardiere, the inhabitants of New Caledonia appease their hunger with a white, friable earth, said to be composed of magnesia, silica, oxide of iron, and chalk. We must add to this list Siam, Siberia, and Kamtchatka as countries of clay-eaters.

SALARIES IN THE STATES.—The following are among the highest salaries paid in the United States: Mr. Roberts, president [illegible] Pennsylvania system, [illegible] President Harris, of the New York Central, $25,000; President Adams, of the Union Pacific, $30,000; President Strong, of the Atchison [illegible], and Senor [illegible] the receipts of the Chicago and North-western, the Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy, and the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul, $25,000.

H. H. Singleton, a blind man who lives near Tucoon, Ga., is able to tell the denomination of a bank note or check by feeling it, and counts money almost as rapidly as a bank clerk.

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

America has fifty-seven counties bearing the name of Washington; of cities, towns, and villages of this name there are 250, besides a Washington Hollow, Washington Heights, Washington Lake, and half a dozen Washingtonvilles.

A man named Wilson, serving a life sentence in the Stillwater (Minn.) penitentiary, has discouraged the efforts of his friends to secure his pardon. "He says that he would rather pass his lifetime in the penitentiary than in the poorhouse."

It is said that in the southern part of Russia the peasants use a coin of such small value that it would take 250,000 of them to buy an American dollar, and these coins are so scarce that a man who with a hundred is looked upon as rich, and one has a thousand is considered very wealthy. It is strange to think a person wealthy who owns two fifths of a cent, and comfortably well off on one-twenty-fifth of a cent. But the value of money depends, of course, on what it will buy.

Among curious trees may be mentioned the cow tree, of the Cordilleras, which grows at a height of three thousand feet above sea level. It is a lofty tree with laurel-like leaves, and though receiving no moisture for seven months of the year, when its trunk is tapped a bountiful stream of milk bursts forth. It flows most freely at sunrise, when the natives may be seen coming from all directions with pans and pails to catch the milk, which is said to have a pleasant sweet taste, but becomes thick and yellow in a short time and soon turns into cheese.

At Fredericton, N. B., a young couple visited the residence of a clergyman to be married. The ceremony had begun, and the prospective bride said she would accept the young man as her husband. The minister began to draw a picture of a marriage that had proved to be unhappy. Without waiting to hear the bright side of the picture, she pushed her lover's hand away, declaring: "I will not have you." The young man was thunderstruck, but neither he nor the minister could induce her to change her mind. She seized her [illegible] and [illegible] in a [illegible] manner, which [illegible] prospects. So goes the story.

A story that points a moral against both overfeeding and petty larceny is told in connection with the banquet to General Sheridan in Boston the other night. Among the waiters was a South End colored man, who took advantage of the opportunity to eat heartily of the sweets and fancy dishes. He also packed his valise full of knives, spoons and silverware, and went home. During the night his [illegible] stomach rebelled, and, supposing he was at the point of death, he told the doctor he had something to say before he died. He then told of the stolen silverware and asked the doctor to send it back to the owners. The property was returned, and the sick man recovered, but has not been arrested.

The amatory tastes of the youthful Gauls, says the Pall Mall Gazette, are rather peculiar. Parisian dandies have lately taken to paying their addresses to elderly dames who are what is called "well preserved," while youthful beauties are rather left out in the cold. The belle who is "well preserved" may be fifty or sixty; in fact, the older the better, provided that the wig is on well and that the teeth have been put in their place by an experienced dentist. A countess who is not at all old was lately asked why she persisted in giving herself rather an antiquated appearance. Her reply was characteristic of the times: "Ah, I do it to please the young fellows better. If I failed to do so they would all run after that horrible old hag of a baronne, who is 65 if she is a day."

The theory advanced by some people that accidents of the same nature are very apt to occur in groups was carried out last [illegible] A New York [illegible] Wednesday [illegible] in the Roosevelt Hospital took place, whereby a helpless patient was hurled down to death. On Friday no less than three mishaps in connection with elevators were reported. One occurred in [illegible] which [illegible] carried up a mass of iron weighing about a ton. All the men were badly hurt, but none fatally. In Newark an elevator with two men on board tumbled from a fifth story to the ground floor because of the breaking of a rope; both men were seriously injured. The same day a porter in White street [illegible] got a [illegible] body [illegible]

A Bright Future.

[illegible]

Address [illegible]

Our Young Folks.

"THE DANE."

BY L. I.

MRS. GREY, with her young son Paul, had gone to a town in the south of France to spend a few months. It was a fine town, built close by the sea, with groves of tall trees, which gave nice shade when the sun was too hot.

Mrs. Grey was rich, and Paul had, of course, lots of toys to play with; but what he was more fond of than his toys was his own great dog, "The Dane;" and "The Dane," in his turn, was quite as fond of Paul.

Mrs. Grey's house was a brick one, but there was a room at the back of it made of wood, which Paul had for his play-room.

One day when the nurse had gone out to some shops, Mrs. Grey sat at the window with Paul. All his toys were strewn on the floor; he said he had had a great fight, and all the men were dead, and now he was King; and he put on a fine cap he had got out of a bon-bon, and got on "The Dane's" back, and drew his sword, and made a fine noise. Then he got down and blew his horn; then he had a game of ball, and at last was so worn out with play that he lay down close by "The Dane," and soon slept.

"The Dane" did not sleep, and now and then he would give a low growl and put his head down to the ground in a strange way.

Mrs. Grey did not feel well. She had not for three days past. There had been no air, no breeze, and it felt so close it made her head ache.

She knew her boy was safe in "The Dane's" charge, and she went up to her room to get some scent.

She could not find it at first, and had to search for it; then she felt the whole house shake—things fell to the floor, and, worse than that, there was a great crash of bricks, and stones fell in and round her. She put up her hands to save her head from the blows, and her hands and arms were cut and hurt by the sharp stones as they fell; and they fell so fast she could not get out of their way to get to the door.

It was not shut; that was a good thing; but just then a beam from the roof struck her head, and she fell to the floor.

What had come to her own dear Paul? If a stone fell on him it would kill him, and now she could not get to him to know if he were safe!

It was not long, though she thought it was an age, till she heard a voice. She knew it was the nurse come back; but she could not hear what she said. She spoke so low that it made Mrs. Grey fear the worst; and then she heard "The Dane's" low, deep bark.

And if he were safe, Paul might be too; she knew how close the two were side by side when she left the room. Then the next thing she heard was the soft pat of "The Dane's" paws, and the sound of his bark in the room, close to her head.

Then she knew no more, for she was in a faint.

* * * * * *

"There was a slight shock in the night," the nurse heard a man say in a shop that she went to. She did not know what he meant, and thought no more of it; she did what she had to do, and went on her way home.

But how strange it was! When she was near Mrs. Grey's house she felt the earth shake, and a great house in front of her crack and, with a great noise, fall to the ground.

There were cries and shrieks all round her, and crowds were soon in the streets, for they all fled from their homes, which they thought would fall on them; but they knew they were not safe in the streets, and so they made their way to the beach.

Then there were lots of tales told. One man said for days past his horse was so strange, as if wild with fear, he could not drive or ride him; and some said their dogs, too, had been so odd, and would not rest; and some said, "There was a shock a few days since, but if we had told of it the rich folk would have left the town, and that would have done us harm."

When the nurse got back she met Mrs. Grey's maid in tears.

"Oh! Mrs. Grey must be dead," said the maid. "She was in her room when the shock came; the door is not shut, but I do not see her, and her room is full of bricks and stones."

"And Paul," said the nurse, "where is he?"

"I don't know," said the girl. "I did not dare stay in the house, it shook so."

"Poor child!" said the nurse, as she flew in to look for him.

When she came to the play-room door she stood still, and what did she see but the child still in a deep sleep on the floor, quite safe, "The Dane" at his side.

He gave a bark of joy when he saw the nurse, then left her with the child, and ran up to Mrs. Grey's room.

"I thank God the child is safe," said the nurse. "Now I will go and find Mrs. Grey."

When she got up to her room there was "The Dane" hard at work; with his great, strong paws he dug and threw on one side the bricks and stones. At last a short bark told how he knew his work would soon be done. The nurse went to help, too; but "The Dane" was the one that first came to Mrs. Grey, and the first thing she felt when she woke from her swoon was his cold brown nose on her face.

"Drink this," said the nurse, as she brought her a glass of wine.

"Where is Paul?" said Mrs. Grey.

"He is quite safe," said the nurse; "he slept through it all, I think, and when I came in I found 'The Dane' by his side, as though he were on guard."

The joy of the news was too great for Mrs. Grey, and once more she fell back in a faint.

Then the nurse ran out, and got some men to come in and help lift her out down to the beach, and Dr. Lane went to her there to bind up her cuts and wounds.

When Paul woke up and heard all the nurse had to tell him, he said, "Good old 'Dane,' I love you more and more."

A tent was put up for them on the beach, and they slept there that night, which Paul thought was great fun. As soon as Mrs. Grey was quite well they made haste to leave the town where they had had so great a fright.

It was a good thing that Paul's play-room was built of wood: that was why it stood quite safe; whilst the house, which was built of brick, fell down to the ground.

WATCHED BY A TIGER.

BY O. W.

SOME years since, while engaged in tea planting in India, I met with an unpleasant adventure.

I had been to inspect some newly-felled trees, and, after having done so, was not best pleased to find I had delayed so long, that evening was rapidly closing in as I set on my return home, the way to which lay along a forest road, frequented only in the early morning; either side of this road being lined by tall trees with tangled underwood beneath.

Being on foot and unarmed, I kept the middle of the path, peering sharply around as I hurried on, knowing it was highly probable I might meet or see one or other of the wild beasts known to abound in the forest, and who only venture forth as night approaches.

When within a mile of the bungalow, which I hoped to reach without mishap, I began to whistle to keep my courage up, quite forgetting the old saying that recommends people "not to whistle till they are out of the wood."

I suddenly came to a dead stop in the middle of the tune "Polly put the kettle on," and stood for a second paralyzed with horror, for there, right in the centre of the pathway, stood a full-grown Bengal tiger, his tail swaying slowly backwards and forwards, like that of a cat when expecting the one o'clock meat-man.

Fortunately he was looking down the road, so did not see me; hence I had time to consider—and in a moment of danger your wits become sharp enough.

To go on was not to be thought of; to run back was as much out of the question, as the nearest house in that direction was many miles away, and, did he give chase, the race would have been a very short one; so, swiftly, but silently as I could, I made for the nearest tree, keeping my eyes on the animal all the time.

How I reached the first branch, quite eight feet from the ground, I never can recollect, but in scrambling to a higher one I made so much noise that he heard me, and came bounding to the spot in a series of leaps which I daresay were very graceful, but I was not in a condition of mind to regard his movements.

Stopping full in front of the bottom of my piece of refuge, he looked up, then down the road, and at last turned his fierce, glaring eyes among the branches, very much to my discomposure.

On clearly making me out he gave utterance to several short grunts of satisfaction, by no means exhibiting that alarm which many travellers assert the boldest wild beast shows when encountering a human being; but as I crouched huddled up in a heap some twenty feet above him my attitude could not be regarded as all as a defiant one.

Sufficient daylight remained for me to watch proceedings, which I did with considerable anxiety, for, though unusual, there are well-authenticated instances of tigers climbing trees, but as I had fairly recovered my presence of mind I reckoned that, did he try to follow me, I could, being a light weight, scramble high above any branch that would bear his huge body.

First he sniffed the ground all round the tree bole, pausing on his hind legs, stretched himself out to his full length till his fore paws reached unpleasantly close to the lowest branch, while staring me full in the face the while; now one paw and then the other, with claws well out, was drawn through the bark just like the domestic puss when sharpening his or her claws on a piece of soft wood.

Suddenly he sank to earth, and without apparent effort bounded on to the lower branch, but it bent and swayed under him so much that he could not obtain anything like a firm footing, and after vainly endeavoring to get a position, he dropped to the ground with an angry roar that was heard a mile away, and which, as I afterwards learnt, so frightened the people of the factory, who were just setting out to search for me, that they hastened indoors.

Night now closed in, and up to the time I could penetrate the gloom I could see the dark figure of the brute sitting on his haunches, hoping, no doubt, that I might drop down and provide him with a supper.

That I was there for the night there was now no doubt, and the winter nights in India are uncommonly cold; but I had to make the best of a bad business. Sleep of course was out of the question, for not only might I tumble from my perch, but the tiger might try another climb with better success than his first attempt.

At length, when quite worn out by my nearly ten hours' cramped position, the first streak of dawn appeared.

To my delight the bloodthirsty watcher had disappeared; but aware of their cunning, I made no effort to descend, as I suspected, though unseen, he was in hiding close by, and I had no desire to be pounced upon unawares.

An hour passed, and my ears were gladdened by the sound of men coming down the road, but, on making an effort to get down, I was dismayed to find my limbs had become so cramped that I could not safely move without assistance.

Shouting to arrest the attention of the passers-by, who were now near the foot of the tree—and who stared and peered around for some seconds ere they could make out where the voice came from—I explained my difficulty, pointing at the same time to the paw marks of the tiger to corroborate my story.

Three or four men quickly divested themselves of their cotton loin-cloths, and two stout Mohammedans were soon up beside me. One roughly chafed my numbed limbs, while the other, securely knotting the cloths together, passed them under my arms, and quickly, though gently, lowered me to the ground; more rubbing restored the use of my legs, and with some assistance I was able to walk home, mentally resolving that nothing again should induce me to wander about the outskirts of an Indian forest, unarmed, in the small hours of either evening or morning.

THE BANISHED PARROT.

BY PIPKIN.

A LARGE grey parrot once found his cage door left open by accident, and profiting by the occasion, hopped out. Fortunately for him, the window was open too, so he escaped from captivity altogether, and flew away.

"At last I am free!" he cried, in a tone of delight. "And to think that a bird of my position has had to talk the language of those curious two-legged creatures for so many years!

"And then no one knows, who hasn't tried it, what a harrowing thing it is to sit and see the sugar-basin within a yard of you, and know that you can't get a lump even if you crane your neck till it is a wonder it doesn't come off.

"There was a man, I believe, who wrote some nonsense about iron bars not making a cage. It is quite clear that he didn't know what he was writing about, and that he was never poked with pencils and tickled with feathers to make him jump about and not be sulky.

"Well, thanks to that careless Jane, who left the cage door unfastened, I have regained my long-lost liberty, and now I think the best thing to do will be to settle down in some nice wood for the rest of my days. No doubt there will be plenty of society of a small kind, and the birds will naturally look up to me."

Following out this resolve, the parrot at last took up his abode in a delightful wood, which abounded with songsters of various kinds—linnets, thrushes, blackbirds, larks, and others.

The unusual size and appearance of the new arrival attracted universal attention, and caused quite a flutter of excitement. All the birds either called or sent their cards, and the respect and deference with which he was treated thoroughly delighted the conceited old parrot.

The way the old croaker domineered over the other inhabitants of the wood can hardly be described. In early morning, when the dew was glittering like fairy diamonds on the grass, and the birds were singing their matin songs, out would come Mr. Parrot to know "what was all that noise about in the middle of the night? Singing, forsooth! He thought all the monkeys in the Zoo had got loose, and were holding a concert to see which could sing the worst. The linnets sang all out of tune, and the thrushes didn't keep time, and one of the blackbirds had a voice like a nutmeg grater! If they called that singing, well, he was very sorry, but he begged to differ from them!"

They determined that something must be done, and, headed by a courageous cuckoo, who disliked the parrot because he had read her a lecture for laying her eggs in her neighbors' nests, they held a meeting, and solemnly called upon the offender to appear.

Up bustled the parrot, bristling with excitement, for, deluded bird, he thought they were going to make him king, as a reward of merit. Instead of that he was promptly taken into custody by a band of rooks, who, being strong of beak and sturdy of claw, had been sworn in as special constables.

"What! What! What! Why! Why! Why!" spluttered the parrot, whose great rage prevented him from speaking distinctly.

The poor birds began to feel quite depressed, and ashamed of themselves and their music, for the parrot was so large and strong, and spoke with such an air of authority, that they imagined that he must be right.

Then, when the building season came round, the fuss he made about the nests! "They were badly constructed; they were draughty; they would fall to pieces at the first puff of wind; one was too large; another too small; and whatever possessed Mrs. Lark to build her house on the ground. Why, the rats would be sure to eat up all her eggs, and serve her right too! She only wanted to be different from other people, and it wasn't respectable." In short, the parrot made himself so unpleasant and so unpopular, that at last the other birds could endure it no longer.

The rooks gave him two or three good pecks as a hint to hold his tongue; and the cuckoo began in a loud voice.

"Prisoner at the bar! You are accused of disturbing the peace of a cheerful and contented community. Nothing pleases you; you find fault with everything and everybody, and according to you, no one knows how to sing, build, fly, climb, or hop. Now, Mr. Parrot, unless you can do these things better than we can you have no business to find fault with us; so in the first place, let us hear you sing."

The gray parrot turned all colors of the rainbow, he cleared his throat, he gave vent to a discordant whistle; then he hung his head and mumbled, "I can't sing."

All the birds gave a groan, and the cuckoo proceeded in a severe tone.

"Can you not build a nest like a hedge sparrow?"

"No, I cannot," muttered the poor prisoner.

"Can you fly like a crow?"

"No."

"Then," cried the cuckoo, with a burst of indignation, "you are a boaster and an impostor; and the sentence of the court is (speaking very quickly) that you be banished from this wood for ever, with the warning that if you venture back you will most assuredly be pecked to death, and your body hung up for a scarecrow!"

This sentence was executed with such rapidity that before he had time to say a word the parrot found himself hurried away by the rooks, and deposited in a field at a short distance from the wood.

After wandering about disconsolately for a few days he was caught by a plough-boy, who put him in a cage and sold him for five dollars.

He never had another opportunity of escaping, but remained a close captive until the end of his life.

A PRETTY CUSTOM.—At Mexican balls a very pretty custom exists of selling cascarones. A cascarone is an empty egg-shell, with an opening in one end, just large enough to remove the original contents. In it is placed about a teaspoonful of finely-chopped paper of various bright colors and gold tinsel, and then the opening is neatly closed with a piece of colored paper over it, and the cascarone is ready for use.

In Mexico, in the good old times, sand dust mixed with diamond dust was often used to fill the egg-shells at the great balls given by grandees of the ancient regime. The impact of the cascarone, when it is thrown at anybody, only results in a very soft tap, and the egg-shell breaking, covers the receiver with a ludicrous shower of tiny colored fragments.

It is said that the act of breaking the cascarone on anyone's head is to be considered a compliment to the recipient, who is in all honor bound to return it at the first opportunity.

A cascarone, if thrown by a pretty maiden to anyone of the opposite sex, is considered to be an invitation to try and take a kiss, or a suggestion that the recipient of the cascarone should at least, if it be thrown at a ball, ask for the next dance.

THE TRICKS OF IT.—A shrewd clerk in a St. Louis store finds pleasure and profit in securing customers. If a woman asks for a certain brand or of shoe too experienced clerk will not go away and get them. He will take off her shoe and have a look at her foot, from which he can tell at a glance just what will fit her. Then one that will please her foot and comfort her and that will look nice, and she purchases at once. If you take her word or the number the chances are that you will be deceived, for a woman has an unaccountable objection to telling her exact number, even if it is to her loss. A green clerk soon learns this peculiarity after he has shown everything in the store to several who will not buy. Another rule with women is not to show them too much. Let them see several nice things and their choice is easy, if they are suited, but show them your whole stock and they will want to see more. I find that ladies are not so given to cramming their feet sometimes, so as to make them seem smaller. Young misses still do it, but women of the world are not so willing to injure their feet.

OF the Davy family of Rochester, the eldest girl is in the workhouse as incorrigible, the father is jailed as a drunkard, and Esau, the eldest son, aged 9, being left at home in charge of his three sisters, aged 5, 6, and 8, took them to a church, where the whole party loaded up with bibles, hymn books and fans, and got well away before they were overhauled by a policeman and taken to the station. There three silver watches were found in Esau's pockets. He and his sisters were sent to a charitable institution.

Miss Clara (to Featherly, who is making an evening call)—"Poor little Bobby swallowed a penny to-day, and we've all been so much worried about it." Featherly (somewhat at a loss for words of encouragement)—"Oh, I—er—wouldn't worry, Miss Clara; a penny is not much."

SHALL WE EVER?

BY WM. W. LONG.

Shall we ever roam together,
In the light of summer hours?
Shall we stray beside bright waters,
Where in beauty bloom sweet flowers?
When the zephyrs softly kiss you,
Will you, lady, think of me,
Though I wander in the tropics,
Or upon some foreign sea?

You are very handsome, lady,
Coy and gentle, pure and fair;
Eyes like stars of bright young summer,
Rose-kissed cheek and wavy hair.
Angel spirits guard your footsteps,
Virtue rests upon your brow;
And may life be ever to you
Full of happiness as now.

May the God of earth and heaven
Guide you ever on your way,
Keep your young life ever spotless
As a fair, bright summer day.
And when life is passing from you,
When the better land appears,
May you meet the sinless Saviour
Where there is no vale of tears.

FIGURES OF SPEECH.

Language from one point of view may be regarded as fossilized thought. Just as in strata of the rocks are found remnants of extinct genera and species, so, in our every-day language, words and expressions survive, still bearing the almost obliterated traces of ancient and half-forgotten theories. In our calmest moments we use metaphors and similes once instinct with passion, but now part and parcel of the common coin of current thought.

We speak of an army being smitten by "disastrous panic" without reflecting that our epithet implies belief in astrology, or that our substantive indicates faith in the existence of the god Pan. We describe man as "jovial" or "mercurial" in disposition without any conscious reference either to Jupiter or Mercury.

But perhaps the most remarkable series of latent metaphors in our language are those of the physiological type which contain references to the organs and functions of the human body. Few words are more frequently on our lips than "warm-hearted," "cool-headed," "good-humored," "ill-tempered."

We talk of "venting the spleen," "a man of that kidney," "a keen eye for business," "a good ear for music," "a silver-tongued orator," "a victim of hypochondriasis." All these expressions, however loosely employed in general, involve a theory, and in most cases the theory is either false or partly inaccurate.

First in frequency and importance must be placed that vast range of expressions which refer to the heart as the seat of the soul, and especially of the emotional soul. These expressions are found in the earliest known writings, and have become the commonplaces of almost every nation.

We talk of the devices and desires of the heart. The heart of kings is said to be unsearchable. Here the heart stands for the whole nature, "writ short", but with reference rather to the natural disposition and the moral character than to the intellectual powers. More frequently, however, the heart stands for the affections and emotions.

Especially do we speak of the heart when we are thinking of the devotion of a lifetime. The bride at the altar is said to give her "hand and heart"—the former signifying her person and fortune, and the latter implying the surrender of her affections.

One almost hesitates to profane such sacred expressions with the hint that they are one and all false to nature; yet such is the hard fact. The heart is not the source or seat of the emotions; it is, on the contrary, one of the most prosaic, although most vital, organs of the body. All these motions have their seat in the brain.

Yet it is not very difficult to discern why so many nations have instinctively spoken of the heart as the seat of the emotions. Love powerfully influences the heart's action, as every poet has remarked and sung. The subtle chain of association that makes the heart throb at the distant glance of an eye, the flutter of a dress, the sight of an envelope, the odor of a withered flower, the touch of a tress of hair, were it not so familiar, would justly be regarded as one of the most wonderful facts of our nature.

The opposite emotion, hatred, is also one that exerts a marked influence over the heart. Sudden terror affects the heart most of all, often causing fainting, and, in very rare cases, sudden death. "Death from fright" is fortunately an event of extreme infrequency, but there is no reason to doubt its possibility.

In all these cases, however, it must still be borne in mind that the heart is secondarily affected by the emotion, and is never the source or origin of it. It is like the index on the engine which shows the pressure of the steam. The source of the steam is the water, and the fire beneath; and the source of emotion lies hidden in the mysterious recesses of the brain.

The conventional use of metaphors which allude to the heart as the seat of emotion naturally exercises an almost unconscious influence upon thought and action. Actors put their hands to their hearts when they wish to indicate visibly an excess of emotion. In real life, people, when powerfully excited, do not put their hands to their hearts. Pressing the hand to the forehead, or bending the head slightly forward, is a more usual and more natural gesture, and correctly indicates the true seat of the emotions.

The liver contributes materially to our stock of physiological metaphors. We often use the word "melancholy", which means literally "black bile", and still points out how a disordered liver was regarded as the source of despondency and mental depression.

The spleen figures largely in metaphor. "Splenetic" was a favorite epithet of some of the older writers, and "to vent the spleen" is a phrase still occasionally heard. It is an unlucky expression, because the spleen does not manufacture any secretion, and has, therefore, nothing to vent; and secondly, it has not the remotest relation to the emotions.

The kidneys are frequently mentioned in the Book of Psalms under the title of the "reins" and are invested with various moral and intellectual functions. They survive yet in modern English metaphor in the single expression "a man of that kidney," a phrase both false and objectionable.

Many of the organs of the body are employed in metaphor in a way that is partly accurate and partly inaccurate. We talk of "a keen eye for business;" but we know that it is not the eye of the business man that we have most in view, but rather his general intelligence. The "quick ear" for music which some fortunate persons possess would be of little value if it did not really imply the correlative faculty of musical taste and appreciation, which belong to the brain.

We do not imagine that any conviction, however clear, of the inaccuracy of most of our physiological metaphors would be likely to dislodge them from the secure position which they have so long held in current speech. Metaphorical language is natural to man, and strict accuracy is not likely to be regarded, if force and fervor can be attained.

Grains of Gold.

Prayer purifies: it is a self-preached sermon.

Vices are often habits rather than passions.

There is no joy like the joy of resolved virtue.

Teaching is of more importance than exhorting.

Vice is contagious and there is no trusting the sound and the sick together.

In prayer it is better to have a heart without words than words without a heart.

If you would not have affliction visit you twice, listen at once to what it teaches.

If He prayed who was without sin, how much more it becometh a sinner to pray!

Some one has said of a fine and honorable age that it was the childhood of immortality.

Ceremonies are different in every country: but true politeness is everywhere the same.

Success serves men as a pedestal; it makes them look larger, if reflection does not measure them.

Christian patience is something more than a thought, or an emotion, or a tear; it is action.

We cannot be guilty of greater uncharitableness than to interpret afflictions as punishments and judgments.

Few persons have sufficient wisdom to prefer censure which is useful to them to the praise which deceives them.

If the passions sometimes influence us more than the judgment, it is because they give us more force to execute them.

Few are the faults we flatter when alone; vice sinks in her allurements, is ungilt, and looks, like other objects, dark by night.

Femininities.

Only 37 widows of the Revolution are left.

Our pleasant vices make instruments to scourge us.

A number of New York society ladies have formed bowling clubs.

An attractive brooch of gold represents a folded lace handkerchief.

Parlor suits of six pieces, no two alike, are in fashion and in favor.

"Velutina" is a new material which can hardly be distinguished from silk velvet.

A new fashion for bridesmaids is to carry an ebony and silver walking stick, to which is fastened a bouquet.

Elsie: "I had 27 offers of marriage this season, dear." Ellie: "All from the same man, love?"

A new and popular design for scarf, hair and bonnet pins is a gold interrogation mark, set with half-pearls.

Dancing shoes are of bronze or black kid, with high vamp and ties, and ornamented with large square buckles of polished steel.

Teacher: "What can you tell me of Lot's wife?" Little girl: "Nothin'. Mother says I mustn't talk about other folks behind their backs."

Lather for cleaning windows: "One part of olive oil, one part of spirit of ammonia, two of chalk or whiting, and one of water. Mix to a thick paste.

The lady who works her flower-bed herself, and makes all the preparation, will be amply repaid in health. Early in the season is the time to begin.

Umbrellas of marine blue, green and lilac, as well as red, are making an effort to supplant the sober-colored brown and black ones so long used.

The rage for old silver is growing to be virulent and is replacing the mad excitement which existed with us some years ago in the collection of ceramics.

The Boston women are nothing if not progressive. Now they are going in, some of them, for a chair in the public street where they can have their boots blacked.

Miss Mary Robe, who is shortly to be married to Mr. Griswold, a gentleman with $20,000 a year, fits and makes her own dresses, only employing a dressmaker on rare occasions.

As an inducement to the girls to go West, a paragraph is going the rounds estimating that 30,000 women could find husbands inside of a fortnight in Wyoming and Montana.

Here is a local item published in a Grand Forks, Dak., paper: "Any person wanting a wife or housekeeper, or a servant girl, go to Walsh, the Intelligent, opposite the postoffice."

A small girl of 3 years suddenly burst out crying at the dinner table. "Why, Effie," said her mother, "what is the matter?" "Oh," whined Effie, "my teeth stepped on my tongue."

The American girls are bound to be as English as they can. An impecunious but well educated young Englishman is earning $200 a month teaching four young buds of swelldom the "genuine English accent."

The extent to which the "white horse and red hair" craze has been carried may be understood by the action of a bereaved Texas widow, who insisted that as Jobs had red hair only white horses should draw the hearse.

Modesty was designed by Providence as a guard to virtue, and that it might be always at hand it is wrought into the mechanism of the body. It is likewise proportioned to the occasions of life, and strongest in youth when passion is so too.

"And so you think you will get married when you grow up to be a young lady, Flossie?" said the caller. "Oh, I haven't a doubt of it," assented Flossie. "Everybody says I am very much like my mamma, and she, you know, has been married 3 times."

The Chinese are ahead of the world in the preparation of roast pork for the table. After it has come out of the oven, it is hung in the smoke of various aromatic herbs, which gives it a delicious flavor and robs it of the porky taste which is offensive to some palates.

It is not generally known that the reason hair curls when wound on a hot iron is that the moisture on the side next the iron being evaporated by the heat, the cells in that part approach each other more closely, and this shrinking of one side causes a bend or curve.

A "School of Physical Training" has been established by two ladies in Cincinnati. The course prepares pupils for any college open to women, and attendance upon the gymnasium class is insisted upon. Several of last year's pupils have taken the full Harvard examination with honors.

At Atlanta, Ga., a few days ago, Mrs. Minnie Franklin, a young married lady, and a 6-months'-old infant, whose husband was confined in jail for peddling without a license, was permitted to remain all night in a cell with her husband. She had previously pawned an augur in her bustle. Next night Franklin and 4 prisoners bored out and escaped.

Female beauty appears to be scarce in Mexico. A newspaper correspondent writes: "Whoever comes to Mexico in search of female beauty is liable to meet with disappointment, for, though the dreamy, dark eyes and raven hair of the Castilian-Mexican type is very attractive, the truth is one sees more handsome women on the streets of any Northern city in half an hour than he can find in a year at the Aztec capital."

A well meaning old lady in Devonshire, England, is deeply impressed with the impropriety of the short kilts so commonly worn by Highlanders, and she wishes to organize a philanthropic society which will set itself to convert the Highlanders to long trousers, and, if necessary, give them the money to buy fitting leg gear. The motto of the proposed society shall be: "Charity shall cover the multitude of shins."

Masculinities.

Desks for offices and rooms are made to contain a concealed washstand.

Learn the art, to be preferred before all others, of being happy when alone.

A man who helps to circulate a piece of gossip is as bad as the one who originated it.

George Peppers, once a $500,000 oil man, died at Sarcoxie, Mo., the other day, a vagrant.

A Greek wedding ceremony lasts all day. The richer the family the more priests are employed for the service.

Baby King Alfonso XIII., of Spain, has received a present of 10,000 cigars from a tobacco merchant of Havana.

Mr. Featherly: "What beautiful teeth Miss Smith has!" Miss Sharptongue: "Yes, I think this set much prettier than her other."

The most trying position a truthful clergyman can be in is to be preaching the funeral sermon of a man who died rich and mean.

When you see a man with a great deal of religion displayed in his shop window, you may depend upon it he keeps a very small stock of it within.

Wife: "John, who was it said that silence was golden?" Husband: "I don't remember, love, but I think he must have been a poor married man."

Do not marry for riches, my son; but remember that the husband of an heiress is seldom obliged to get up at 5 o'clock in the morning and build the fire.

"Ah, Adolphus!" she murmured, "I fear I am not worthy of you; you are so good." "Never mind, darling," he said, tenderly, "wait till we're married."

The strength of a rope is in its many strands, and a united household and a happy one is that in which the thoughts and purposes of the inmates are well twined together.

The flesh of the lark was supposed by the old medicines to strengthen the voice and increase its sweetness; in Bohemia its eggs are still believed to have the same property.

When you doubt between words, use the plainest, the commonest, the most idiomatic. Eschew fine words as you would rouge, love simple ones as you would native roses on your cheek.

He, after slipping the engagement ring on her finger: "And are you pleased with it, darling?" She: "Delighted, George! It is so different from anything of the sort I've ever had before."

A Montgomery Station, Pa., farmer recently sent $10 to the Commissioners of Emigration in New York requesting them to find him a wife who could hoe and do farm work. The commission was declined.

The two most precious things on this side the grave are our reputation and our life. But it is to be lamented that the most contemptible whisper may deprive us of the one, and the weakest weapon of the other.

St. Louis swain, returning from the opera: "Well, Miss Shawsgarden, did you enjoy the opera?" Miss S.: "Oh, very much, indeed; but I think that charging you 15 cents a pint for peanuts was simply outrageous!"

A physician lecturing upon physical exercise declared that if only 20 minutes a day should be spent in physical exercise as an adjunct to mental education we might live to be 70 without a day's illness, and perhaps prolong our lives to 100 years.

An Indianapolis lady has been left a handsome fortune by the will of a former lover, a French Canadian, with whom she quarreled 20 years ago. He returned to his native land after the engagement was broken and she never saw him again.

A flock of wild turkeys alighted in the cornfield of John Walker, near Cowden, Ind. The ground was muddy, and the weather turning cold suddenly their feet were frozen into the earth and they were all captured. Mr. Walker can tell a good story.

"Wose, deah, tell me—ah—did you make a memowandum of the—ah—wemark I made to you when I was here befoah?" "No, Charlie, I didn't." "That's dweadful, 'cause, don't yer know, I cawn't wecollect myself whether I pwoposed to you or Clawa."

In Millersburg, Ky., where James G. Blaine taught school when a young man, lives "Ike" Smith, a young colored man, who wears shoes made on a No. 18 last. They are the largest shoes in Kentucky. Smith is 6 feet 7 inches tall, and weighs 340 pounds.

The United States Government does not permit of the employment of women to have charge of elevators in its public buildings, for the reason that they are liable to become nervous in case of accident, and subject the government to suits for damages.

A palsy may as well shake an oak, or a fever dry up a fountain, as either of them shake, dry up, or impair the delight of conscience. For it lies within, it centres in the heart, it grows into the very substance of the soul, so that it accompanies a man to his grave; he never outlives it.

At Danville, Ind., the other day, a blooming widow, whose husband had been dead only a few weeks, took unto herself another husband. After the ceremony, and on the same day, the newly wedded attended the husband's mother's funeral, and the day after the wife's mother's funeral.

Old gentleman, to very rich old lady at a party: "Who is that handsome young man standing over there?" Old lady: "That's my son-in-law. He's a very brilliant young man—made a large fortune by the law." Old gentleman: "Indeed! How's that?" Old lady: "Fife law made him my daughter's husband."

Among the sights that attracted attention recently on the Schuylkill river, at Fairmount, was a little boy skater clutching the tail of a large dog, and who was thus being carried over the ice at a good pace. The dog went along willingly, and seemed to be as much amused as the youngster behind and the hundreds of onlookers by the queer spectacle he was presenting.

Recent Book Issues.

"The Co-operative Building Plan Association" of New York have issued a twenty-five cent edition of their "Artistic Modern Houses," which builders will find useful.

"How to Succeed as a Stenographer and Typewriter," with quiet hints and gentle advice by one who "has been there," is a good little handbook, by Arthur M. Baker. Price 25 cents. New York, Fowler & Wells Co., publishers, 775 Broadway. For sale by Lippincott & Co.

"Heads and Faces, and How to Study Them;" a manual of phrenology and physiognomy for the people, by Prof. Nelson Sizer, phrenological examiner, and Dr. H. S. Drayton, editor of the "Phrenological Journal." A new edition of this excellent work has just been published. Fowler & Wells, New York. Price 40 cents.

"The Original Mr. Jacobs" is a terrible diatribe upon the Jewish nation and their past and present history. It is an American book reproducing and teaching the "Jew-hate" which of late years has been so strong in Europe, notably France and Germany. While we cannot commend it for its trying to disseminate hatred of this race in this country, there is no denying that in its historical, political and social details it is of intense interest. Published by the Minerva Publishing Co., No. 10 West Twenty-third street, New York.

FRESH PERIODICALS.

One of the latest ventures in monthly magazine literature is called *Woman*, devoted, as its name implies, to the fair sex. The February number, the third issue, has for its leading article a most interesting detailed description of the Young Women's Christian Association of New York, by Beatrice Presswood King. Other contributions are "Sue Was Dismissed," a detective story by Julian Hawthorne; "Fun in the Frigid Zones," an interesting Polar sketch, by Lieut. Schwatka; "Jacinth," a touching tale by Anna Eichberg; "School Mothers and Home Helpers," by Caroline B. Le Row; "The Care of Children," by Anna L. Potts, M. D.; "Home Decoration," "The Table," "Helps and Hints for Mothers," "Societies for Christian Work," "Our Society," "About Woman," poetry, events of the month, etc. Fortuny's Peasant Girl serves as a frontispiece, and some of the articles are illustrated. The magazine deserves to succeed. Terms $2 a year. Published at 122 Nassau street, New York.

As it Used to Be.—One hundred years ago not a pound of coal or a cubic foot of gas had been burned in the country. No iron stoves were used, and no contrivance for economizing heat was employed until Dr. Franklin had invented the iron-framed fire-place which still bears his name. All the cooking and warming in town as well as in the country was done by the aid of a fire kindled on the brick hearth or in the brick ovens. Pine knots or tallow candles furnished the light for the long winter nights, and sanded floors supplied the place of rugs and carpets.

The water used for household purposes was drawn from deep wells by the creaking sweep. No form of pump was used in this country, so far as we can learn, until after the commencement of the present century.

There were no friction matches in those early days by the aid of which a fire could be easily started; and if the fire went out on the hearth over night, and the tinder was damp so that the spark would not catch, the alternative remained of wading a long distance through the snow to borrow a brand of a neighbor.

Only one room in any house was warm unless some member of the family was ill; in all the rest the temperature was at zero during many nights in winter. The men and women of a hundred years ago undressed and went to their beds in a temperature like that of our barns and woodsheds.

Tempers.—Tempers are a great trouble in this busy life. They can give so much unnecessary and useless pain. The touchy temper, that flies off at a look, making its possessor look silly to every one else, and very uncomfortable to himself or herself—for even the gentler sex are sometimes touchy. Then we sometimes run against an irritable temper, rubbing the wrong way, when we think of nothing but good for its possessor. Now and then a violent temper, bursting its tethers, rushes over everything, only to find that it is "much ado about nothing"—a cyclone to sweep a doorstep. The sullen temper, like a snarling dog; the discontented temper, uncomfortable because it cannot find a reason for its discontent; the gloomy temper, hunting ever for the "dark side;" the wilful temper, like an angry bull loose in the street—what an "uncanny lot!" They paralyze our better ambitions and take the heart out of our prayers. They take all the glow and brightness off our duties, and make them hard and repulsive. The worst of it is, we are all so guilty, and forget it. All our tempers need to be humbled and washed in deep penitence, and held in steady discipline by a renewed and determined will.

Out of many, one. Of the many plasters that are on the market, the best one is Warner's Log Cabin Plaster. All druggists.

THE NIGHTMARE.

A French physician has recorded a very extraordinary case in which the nightmare attacked an entire regiment of soldiers. Dr. Laurent, the physician in question, said he was surgeon of the First Battalion when it was garrisoned at Palmi, in Italy.

At midnight in the month of June the order to march with all possible speed to Tropea, forty miles away, was given. At seven o'clock on the following evening Tropea was reached, scarcely a single halt having been made by the way.

The men arrived in a pitiful state of exhaustion and fatigue, in consequence mainly of the intense heat, but they found their rations cooked, their quarters prepared, and, after a hearty meal, retired for the night in an abandoned monastery, a building much too small for them. They had to sleep upon heaps of straw, some in one room, some in others.

Just before occupying their unwholesome quarters some of the soldiers heard that the monastery was haunted by a demon dog, and spread the story from one to another, some of them uncomfortably, but most of them merrily. There seemed little fear of their sleep being disturbed after such a day's work as they had done.

But at midnight the deep silence was suddenly broken by loud cries of terror. The white-faced soldiers rushed tumultuously from their chambers in every direction, and one and all at once told the same tale of superstitious terror. One and all had been visited by the phantom dog.

The monastery was abandoned, and the weary soldiers, veterans in war and famous for their bravery, wandered about the town or slept in sheds or outhouses, rather than again face the terrors of what was undoubtedly a bad attack of nightmare consequent upon sleep following an undigested meal taken while in a condition of utmost fatigue.

Some idea of the awful state of terror into which the distorted images of the fancy or memory have thrown people may be gleaned from the fact that medical men have recorded many cases which have resulted in death.

An artist of eminence, whose engraved pictures are now to be seen in every printshop window, has the nightmare occasionally, but with him it invariably takes one form. He seems to be awakened by a sensation of coldness such as might be caused by the sudden admission of outdoor air, and at the same time sees a man's hand busy with the window fastening.

He slips quietly from his bed, takes up the poker, conceals himself behind the window curtain, hears the fastening of the window thrust back, and, with a sensation of spiteful glee, raises his weapon to bring it down with all his force upon the head which he knows will in a minute or two be thrust into his room.

The window is softly and slowly raised, and he is in a quiver of eagerness to deal the vengeful blow. There is a grim smile on his face, a fierce flash in his eye, when lo! the head appears.

But—horror of horrors!—the artist's uplifted arm is still and rigid; he cannot strike the blow. And the face then turned towards him is one of hideous mockery and scorn, with a protruding tongue, the fangs of a wild beast, and the expression of a fiend. And so he remains, face to face with this frightful enemy, utterly helpless, and in a state of indescribable torture.

The effect of nightmare in this form is almost a maddening one, and he can only account for its frequent repetition as resulting from an unusually powerful impression made upon his memory, in conjunction with its curious ally, the imagination, which is, in his case, one of more than usual power.

Painted Faces.—In the Prussian chamber of deputies Herr von Zitelmann made the horrifying statement that in Posen he had met with a burgomaster who was quite unable to remember when he had washed himself last.

But it is a well-known fact that a considerable number of Parisian ladies, admired for their beauty, never wash themselves at all. Face, neck, and shoulders are carefully wiped every morning with a dry towel, and then rubbed with a fine ointment; they then appear in all the freshness of youth, with tints varying from dazzling white to a deep pink. Only once a year—generally in autumn—the complexion begins to show cracks and wrinkles; then the beautiful lady disappears for a season. All visitors are refused admission; madame is indisposed.

A fortnight later she emerges like a chrysalis, as beautiful as ever. She has undergone a transformation, a kind of moulting process, which is kept a close secret from everybody except her husband, who has to pay for it to the tune of 2,000 francs. Her far-famed beauty is the work of the enameller, a personage familiar to readers who are old enough to remember the case of Mme. Rachel.

There are several ladies who, twenty-five or thirty years ago, were distinguished for their beauty at the Court of the late Emperor, and whose youthful appearance today is the object of universal admiration.

Of course this artificial crust effectually prevents any facial expression of the lady's feelings; she can only smile faintly with her lips, she is incapable of blushing, and remains cold and impassive, like a statue.

All our physicians recommend Dr. Bull's Cough Syrup for hoarseness and colds. 25c.

Take no "just as good." Get the genuine Salvation Oil. It kills pain. Price 25 cents.

To judge justly of the world we must stand at a due distance from it, which will discover to us the vanity of its riches and honors, in such true dimensions, as will engage us to behave ourselves toward them with moderation. This is all that is wanting to make us wise and good; that we may be left to the full influence of religion, to which Christianity so far conduces, that it is the greatest blessing, the peculiar advantage we enjoy under its institution; that it affords us not only the most excellent precepts of this kind, but also it shows us those precepts confirmed by most excellent examples.

A heathen philosopher may talk very elegantly about despising the world, and like Seneca, may prescribe very ingenious rules to teach us an art he never exercised himself; for all the while he was writing in praise of poverty he was enjoying a great estate and endeavoring to make it greater. But if ever we hope to reduce those rules to practice, it must be by the help of religion.

Five-year-old lad on awakening from a night's sleep—"Mother, does cats go to heaven?" Mother—"I guess not; why my son?" Lad, hesitating for a moment—"Well it's good that they don't, because they would chew the wings off the angels."

WANAMAKER'S.

PHILADELPHIA, February 7, 1888.

Every day adds something fresh to the Dress Goods' stock. The advertiser's pen can not keep pace with the new goods. The following are mentioned because especially suited to early Spring wear, and are very cheap:

Peerless Saterns, 12½ cents.
40 in. French Cashmeres, 50 cents.
36 in. gray and brown mixed Suitings, 29 cents.
Habit Cloth, 54 in., 75 cents. Fifty colorings.
50 in. Broadcloths, $1.25.

The Silks known in the Trade as "Summer Silks," that have been so fashionable, especially for country wear, are of Swiss make. But the price have been squeezed down until production has nearly stopped. Neat checks and stripes in many colorings. 60 cents a yard.
27 in. India Silks, $1.
Shantung Pongee, $5 a pce.
32 in. Black Gros-grain, $1.
Moire Francaise, $1.50.

Three Women's Handkerchiefs:
White Linen, hemstitched, ½ in. hem, one corner neatly embroidered in colors, 2 for 25c.
White Linen, hemstitched, ½ in. hem; embroidered hemstitched blocks in each corner, 15c.
White Linen, initialed, unlaundried, 12½c.

Muslins. A Fine Full Yard-Wide Unbleached Muslin at 6 cents; another, bleached, at 8 cents. Perhaps a saving of 2 cents a yard on either sort. And that in the face of a strong cotton market.

Heaps and heaps of other Muslins, all qualities above the mean, all weights and widths, and all cheap.

Valentines. Probably More Styles than you ever saw together before. A great deal of paper and color and sentiment for 1 cent; more for 2 cents; a 4-story lace-paper maze of brilliancy and filigree and sweet talk, 50 cents, and so on up to hand-painted satin for $5. Some richer, rarer, costlier ones on the way.

Book News for February (44 Pages) tells of the new things in the Book world, and has a list of some of the wonderfully low priced Books in a special lot we have just got hold of. The portrait this month is of Rev. E. E. Hale. 5c, 50c a year.

You are likely to find us constantly on the lookout to give you the best going for the least money possible. We expect your confidence in qualities and prices and mean to earn that confidence by faithfulness.

JOHN WANAMAKER.

THE INVALUABLE DOMESTIC REMEDY!

PHÉNOL SODIQUE.

Proprietors, HANCE BROTHERS & WHITE, Philad'a.

Externally—for all kinds of injuries; *relieving pain* instantly, and rapidly healing the wounded parts.

Gives *prompt* and *permanent relief* in BURNS, SCALDS, CHILBLAINS, VENOMOUS STINGS, or BITES, CUTS and WOUNDS *of every description.*

Internally.—It is invaluable in CHOLERA, YELLOW, TYPHUS, TYPHOID, SCARLET, and other Fevers.

In NASAL CATARRH, *Fetid Discharges from the* EAR, OZÆNA, *Affections of the* ANTRUM, and CANCEROUS AFFECTIONS, it is a *boon to both Physician and Patient.*

For SICK-ROOMS, and all IMPURE and UNHEALTHY LOCALITIES, and to *prevent the spread of* CONTAGION, it is the *best* DISINFECTANT known.

For Sale by Druggists and General Merchandise Dealers

If you

have abused your Stomach by eating or drinking too much, or of the wrong kind of food or liquid, you will

suffer

because your Stomach is angry. Now beware of all temporary expedients. TRY that never-failing, safe Remedy, Dr. Schenck's

Mandrake Pills.

For Sale by all Druggists. Price 25 cts. per box; 5 boxes for 65 cts.; or sent by mail, postage free, on receipt of price. Dr. J. H. Schenck & Son, Philad'a.

R. R. R. RADWAY'S READY RELIEF.

In from one to twenty minutes never fails to relieve PAIN with one thorough application. No matter how violent or excruciating the pain, the Rheumatic, Bedridden, Infirm, Crippled, Nervous, Neuralgic, or prostrated with disease may suffer, Radway's Ready Relief will afford instant ease. It instantly relieves and soon cures

Rheumatism,	**Neuralgia,**
Coughs,	**Colds,**
Cold in the Head,	**Sore Throat,**
Asthma,	**Bronchitis,**
Pneumonia,	**Sciatica,**
Headache,	**Inflammations,**
Toothache,	**Congestion.**

Strong Testimony from Honorable George Starr as to the Power of Radway's Ready Relief in a Case of Sciatic Rheumatism.

No. 3 Van Ness Place, New York.
Dr. Radway: With me your Relief has worked wonders. For the last three years I have had frequent and severe attacks of sciatica, sometimes extending from the lumbar regions to my ankles, and, at times, in both lower limbs.

During the time I have been afflicted I have tried almost all the remedies recommended by wise men and fools, hoping to find relief, but all proved to be failures.

I have tried various kinds of baths, manipulations, outward applications of liniments too numerous to mention, and prescriptions of the most eminent physicians, all of which failed to give me relief.

Last September, at the urgent request of a friend (who had been afflicted as myself), I was induced to try your remedy. I was then suffering fearfully with one of my old turns. To my surprise and delight the first application gave me ease, after rubbing and rubbing the parts affected, leaving the limb in a warm glow, created by the Relief. In a short time the pain passed entirely away, although I have slight periodical attacks approaching a change of weather. I know now how to cure myself, and feel quite master of the situation. RADWAY'S READY RELIEF is my friend. I never travel without a bottle in my valise. Yours truly,

GEO. STARR.

Radway's Ready Relief is a Cure for Every Pain, Sprains, Bruises, Pains in the Back, Chest or Limbs. It was the First and is the Only PAIN REMEDY

that instantly stops the most excruciating pains, allays inflammation, and cures Congestions, whether of the Lungs, Stomach, Bowels or other glands or organs.

INTERNALLY, a half to a teaspoonful in half a tumbler of water will, in a few minutes, cure Cramps, Spasms, Sour Stomach, Nausea, Vomiting, Heartburn, Nervousness, Sleeplessness, Sick Headache, Diarrhœa, Colic, Flatulency and all internal pains.

Malaria in Its Various Forms Cured and Prevented.

There is not a remedial agent in the world that will cure Fever and Ague, and all other Malarious, Bilious and other fevers, aided by RADWAY'S PILLS, so quickly as RADWAY'S READY RELIEF.

R. R. R. not only cures the patient seized with Malaria, but if people exposed to the Malarial poison will every morning take 20 or 30 drops of Ready Relief in water, and eat, say a cracker, before going out, they will prevent attacks.

Travellers should always carry a bottle of RADWAY'S READY RELIEF with them. A few drops in water will prevent sickness or pains from change of water. It is better than French Brandy or Bitters as a stimulant.

Fifty cents per bottle. Sold by druggists.

DR. RADWAY'S SARSAPARILLIAN RESOLVENT,

The Great Blood Purifier

For the cure of all chronic diseases, Chronic rheumatism, scrofulous complaints, etc., glandular swelling, hacking dry cough, cancerous affections, bleeding of the lungs, dyspepsia, water brash, white swellings, tumors, ulcers, hip disease, gout, dropsy, rickets, salt rheum, bronchitis, consumption, liver complaints, etc.

HEALTH! BEAUTY!

Pure blood makes sound flesh, strong bone and a clear skin. If you would have your flesh firm, your bones sound, and your complexion fair, use RADWAY'S SARSAPARILLIAN RESOLVENT.

The wonderful cures effected by the Sarsaparillian Resolvent; its powers over the kidneys in establishing a healthy secretion of urine, curing diabetes, inflammation or irritation of the bladder, albuminous or brick dust deposits or white sand, etc., establishing its character as A GREAT CONSTITUTIONAL REMEDY.

Sold by all druggists. One Dollar a bottle.

RADWAY'S PILLS,

The Great Liver and Stomach Remedy,

For the cure of all disorders of the Stomach, Liver, Bowels, Kidneys, Bladder, Nervous Diseases, Loss of Appetite, Headache, Costiveness, Indigestion, Biliousness, Fever, Inflammation of the Bowels, Piles, and all derangements of the Internal Viscera. Purely vegetable, containing no mercury minerals, or deleterious drugs.

PERFECT DIGESTION

Will be accomplished by taking one of Radway's Pills every morning about ten o'clock, as a dinner pill. By so doing

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Well, may be you do—but I doubt it.

When a shy little hand you're permitted to seize,
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Do you think you can drop it with never a squeeze?
Well, may be you can—but I doubt it.

When a tapering waist is within reach of your arm,
With a wonderful plumpness about it,
Do you argue the point 'twixt the good and the harm?
Well, may be you do—but I doubt it.

And if by these tricks you capture a heart
With a womanly sweetness about it,
Will you guard it, and keep it, and act the good part?
Well, may be you will—but I doubt it.

—U. N. Noxe.

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An embarrassed young man who had just been married, not knowing how to express his gratitude, to handing over a small fee said: "I hope to give you more next time."

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Little 3-year-old Charlie had been listening to mamma, who was reading American history to the older children. "Why did those men throw the tea into Boston harbor?" mamma asked. "Because the British put tacks in it," answered Charlie.

Said a sharp lawyer to a rambling witness: "Now, you must give explicit and exact answers. You said you drove a milk cart, didn't you?" "No, sir; I didn't." "Don't you drive a milk cart?" "No, sir." "Aha! What do you do, sir?" "I drive a hoss, sir."

Bobby: "Didn't you have an umbrella with you last night, Mr. Featherly?" Mr. Featherly: "Umbrella? Why, it didn't rain last night." "Funny," remarked Bobby, dismissing the subject as of no special importance, "I heard pa tell ma that he saw you about 'leven o'clock last night, and that you were pretty well soaked."

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Latest Fashion Phases.

Felt chapeaux are no longer made only in smooth shapes; some of the new models have fluted and indented crowns, which give them the appearance of being draped on a plain form, or of being covered with a drapery of cloth.

The most elegant of these models are embroidered with silk, or with gold, silver, or steel bullion thread and spangles to match, but for ordinary wear the chapeaux are of plain felt and trimming, and eminently lady-like.

A good model, to be worn with a cloth walking costume, is of pale fawn-colored felt, the crown draped and sloped to a rather high peak, and the front sloping up from the narrow flat brim to meet it. The whole of the front is covered by revers of dark-brown velvet ending in points at the ears, and a very small velvet bow is placed in the centre, resting on the hair. A group of curled cocks' feathers rise behind the velvet revers, and fall over them towards the front. The strings, tied in small bows with short ends, are of brown ribbon velvet.

For dressy occasions Directoire chapeaux will be very popular; they are chiefly made of velvet, and very simply trimmed with a little ribbon and a plume of feather tips, put in front between the brim and crown.

A good model is in shot-green velvet; the brim is very flat at the sides, but well opened at the top; behind this part of the brim is the trimming, consisting of a bow of green ribbon velvet, and a plume of green feathers rising above the crown and falling over the edge of the brim. The short strings are of green ribbon velvet; a green aigrette towers above the feathers.

In hats, popularity is divided between low-crowned hats, with straight and narrow brims, and high-crowned models, with very wide brims turned up sharply at the back.

Wide bands of fancy braid, studded with beads or with jet blocks, are much used as a trimming for encircling the crown of the smaller shapes, leaving only the brim and the top of the crown visible, both these being, as a rule, of velvet.

The trimming, placed at the back where the brim is narrowest, consists of bows of ribbon sewn on at the edge of the crown with short loops falling downwards, and longer loops lying on the top of the crown. A fancy feather plume is sometimes added to the bows; bird of Paradise plumes are most fashionable for this purpose, but the long feathers are not used, and the plume rises very little higher than the bows.

The large hats are usually of felt bound with braid, and elaborately trimmed with ribbon and feathers far back on one side; they are imposing-looking edifices, but very becoming to many types of beauty.

Several new varieties of plush have been introduced specially for mantles, many of them being extremely novel and handsome. They are in various colors and patterns, the design being either light on a dark ground, or the reverse, while the ground itself is shaded, moire, or shot.

Tiger-skin plush is one of the most remarkable of these new fabrics, and is occasionally employed also for costumes; but, as a rule, plush of all kinds is reserved for mantles, and the richest models are trimmed with fur. Although more costly in the first place, these plush mantles are so durable that they are generally preferred to velvet, which is easily spoilt by rain, while good plush is not affected by it. Some of the plush mantles in light colors, such as shot pigeon-breast, make charming sorties-de-bal, and are lined with cream, old pink, or some such delicate shade.

The redingote is the foundation not only of many new forms of mantles, but of costumes also; the straight lines of the vetement are in harmony with the taste of the day, and it admits of every variety of fashionable ornamentation, trimmings of fur, braid, passementerie and embroidery being all equally appropriate. The best redingotes are those which open in front over a skirt of some other material, silk or lace for evening wear, and braided cloth or velvet for walking costumes.

A dinner dress in this style is made of black and white pekin. The fronts are open from the shoulders, over a small plastron of the pekin, the stripes of which are horizontal instead of vertical; lace draperies, starting from the shoulder, are crossed in front, and terminate under a pointed band of black velvet, fastened with a bow and ends. The tablier, or front of the skirt, is covered with five white lace flounces mounted on a white silk foundation, with single loops and ends of black ribbon velvet falling at intervals over the flounces. The redingote panels at the sides are slightly draped at the top, the back breadths are mounted with large gathers on the short back. The collar is of velvet, and the sleeves are ornamented with loops of velvet falling over a lace ruffle.

Still it is chiefly for cloth dresses that the redingote form is adopted. These costumes are ornamented in many ways, but layers of scalloped bands of cloth are, perhaps, the most fashionable style of trimming; the bands are in the same or in different colors, and form a very light and pretty garniture, like rows of leaves falling one over the other.

Another way of ornamenting cloth costumes is to stamp out holes forming a pattern, like open embroidery or guipure; bands stamped out in this way form a kind of insertion at the edge of tunics and skirts, and are very effective when lined with another color.

Costumes of light-hued cloth are also ornamented with a kind of network of fine bead embroidery, which is employed for the plastron or yoke, the collar, pockets, parements, etc. An irregular fringe of balls or pear-shaped passementerie drops is sometimes added to these ornaments.

Braiding is already so universal a mode, that in order to save it from being *banal*, it must be employed with great judgment and discrimination. Small designs, worked on the corner of a polonaise, on a collar, revers, or other part of the dress, and executed by hand with very fine braid mixed with passementerie, are now preferred by the best couturieres to the larger patterns, which are more easily copied in a cheap form.

In spite of this, however, an immense number of dresses are braided, and cloth polonaises, ornamented with braiding, are worn over fur-trimmed skirts.

Materials with woven imitations of braided patterns are employed by those ladies who do not care to work the ornaments of their costumes; but these are chiefly used for skirts, being in large patterns. A few very rich costumes are made of peau de soie or of fine cloth over a skirt composed entirely of fur, such a sealskin or astrakan.

The polonaise is, and is likely to continue, very popular; but it is by no means the simple form of vetement so much approved of by amateur and unskilled dressmakers, on account of its extreme simplicity and the ease with which it can be adapted to all kinds of materials and figures.

On the contrary, polonaises are now divided into two distinct classes, both requiring skill and experience on the part of the couturiere; if made of heavy, and usually costly material, the style chosen is that of the open redingote; softer and lighter fabrics are draped in a thoroughly artistic manner, the two sides being rarely alike.

A stylish visiting costume, with a redingote polonaise, is made of three materials, faille, velvet, and chequered woollen ottoman, crossed by double lines of velvet, all in two shades of groseille, the color of a ripe red gooseberry. The skirt is of plain velvet, with a fan pleating of faille on each side of the narrow tablier; this fan, although pleated at the edge, being closely gauged at the top. The open redingote is of the chequered ottoman; the long, plain fronts open to show the tablier, and are slightly caught up far back on the hips, the draping varying a little in details on the two sides. The back is cut like that of a habit bodice with a short pleated basque the long, full puffed back drapery being mounted on a band under the basque. The under bodice, filling the space between the open redingote fronts, which are ornamented with long narrow velvet revers terminating in a point below the waist, is rather elaborate. Nearest the throat is a pointed plastron of velvet, which is open in a point over a white lingerie chemisette and collar, both finely pleated.

Odds and Ends.

IRONING.

As in washing, everything should be ready and in proper order before the day's work is begun. The irons should be scrupulously clean and smooth; this can be done by rubbing them with beeswax and salt, or powdered bath-brick.

The heaviest irons accomplish the best work, and should be used with a rolling motion and a strong pressure. Muslins and prints do not require very hot irons, but stiff, white garments need hotter ones.

The ironing table and board should be firm and strong, and covered with a coarse woollen blanket, over which a clean coarse sheet should be pinned.

A bosom board, about eight inches wide, and a long board for skirts and dresses, are a necessity to the laundry. Iron holders should be padded to protect the hand from burning.

Collars, cuffs and similar articles should be covered with a clean, thin cloth, and the iron passes over it several times, when it may be removed and the iron passed directly over the article.

Fine, soft laces and muslins that do not require polishing should be carefully unrolled, one at a time, and spread on a soft blanket, covered with a thin soft sheet.

Laces, embroideries and trimmings must be carefully pulled into shape, with all the edges and purling picked out; those needing ironing carefully smoothed, and those that do not, folded. Always iron by the thread of the material. Embroidery should be ironed on the wrong side of a soft blanket.

In ironing shirts use heavy irons well heated. First iron the thick bands, then the bodies and sleeves and last the bosom, which should be rubbed with a clean cloth wrung out of warm water. Then the iron should be passed over it rapidly, then rubbed again with a damp cloth, and ironed until it is polished. To gloss the linen a polishing iron with smooth, round edge, should be used with all possible force.

The thickest parts of dresses, such as the waistbands, the gathers and sleeves should be ironed first. Dresses should always be ironed on the wrong side first, and finished on the right. Fine muslins look much better if they are ironed twice in opposite directions.

Caps, frillus and aprons, where the lace is full, should have the frill ironed first. In plaiting frills, each plait should be be held by the thread, and held until ironed in place.

While ironing is difficult work to accomplish nicely, any housekeeper who will take the trouble to give personal supervision to the work will soon teach even an indifferent servant to do it properly. A willing hand guided by a kind and intelligent instructor will soon overcome all obstacles and make the work easy.

Plum Pudding. — One and one-half pounds of raisins, stone them; one and one-half pounds of sultanas, look them over; one and one-half pounds of currants, clean them; one and one-half pounds of finest beef suet, chopped fine; one and one-half pounds of bread crumbs, rubbed fine; one-half pound of mixed candied peel, cut very thin; one-half pound finest flour, nutmeg and spice to taste, the grated rind of lemon and juice, one and one-half pounds soft sugar, six eggs and milk; beat the eggs and milk, then mix all together thoroughly for one-half an hour. This should be made the day before and left all night in a cool place, then stir well again and put in a buttered basin or mold, tie over securely and boil for six or seven hours.

Corns and Bunions.—The corn may be got rid of thus: First remove the cause which produced them; secondly, remove the pressure from the tender parts; steep the feet in hot water, and pare well; wear warm, soft stockings or socks, and rest the feet as much as possible. It is not every chemist who will sell liquor arsenicalis without a medical prescription, as it is highly poisonous, but painting either hard or soft corns with this three times a day causes their disappearance.

Probably the best application to a bunion is the strongest tincture of iodine; but if it is a very bad one, consult a physician and do exactly what he tells you.

Cold feet are often complained of by the delicate, and even by the apparently strong. It is our impression that we ought to try to get more at the root of the evil than we do by simply ordering the feet and legs to be kept warm night and day. Coldness in the feet and extremities points to a lowering of vitality. The system is under par, and needs strengthening, and the circulation usually requires quickening. This, exercise in open air, the use of the dumbbells, and morning bath will generally effect.

THE BAYONET.—That very formidable weapon, the bayonet, is said to have derived its name from the fact that it was first made at Bayonne, and its origin illustrates the proverb: "Necessity is the mother of invention." A Basque regiment was hard pressed by the enemy on a mountain ridge near Bayonne. One of the soldiers suggested that, as their ammunition was exhausted, they should fix their long knives into the barrels of their muskets. The suggestion was acted upon. The first bayonet charge was made, and the victory of the Basques led to the manufacture of the weapon at Bayonne and its adoption into the armies of Europe.

Confidential Correspondents.

MRS. C. L. F. W.—Write to "The Coin Collector's Journal," No. 731 Broadway, New York, for the list required

SAM.—"Uncle Sam" is used as a jocose personification of the United States Government, as "John Bull" is used in the same way for England.

CHESTER.—A practicing doctor in this State must either be a graduate of a medical college or have practiced since 1871. The diploma must be registered.

MAINE.—The Constitution says "that no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification for the holding of any office of trust under the United States."

REGULAR.—Custom has decreed that a man shall wear a white necktie with his dress suit at a large ball; a black necktie may be worn with a dress suit at dinner.

DREAMER.—You can do nothing until the young man declares himself; so give up your day-dreaming, and occupy your mind with some useful work; your writing and spelling are very bad; why not try to improve both?—by all means cultivate self-control; at twenty-five advice of this kind should hardly be necessary.

JOHN G.—We should not say that paralysis is hereditary; but the condition of nervous system that renders such attacks possible and probable may be handed down to posterity. It is very seldom that all the faculties of the body are crippled by a first attack.

A. GRACE.—1. A national championship is open to all competitors; therefore, an Australian or American sculler could challenge an Englishman to row for the championship of England, and vice versa. 2. It is always usual for the challenger to send a written challenge with a deposit, and signed by one witness at least.

SISTER.—Half brothers and sisters are not legally compellable to support each other. Parents and grandparents are liable to maintain their children and grandchildren, and children their parents. Husbands and wives also must maintain each other. But these are the limits of liability on account of relationship.

PHASO.—Communists and Socialists both desire the reconstruction of society on the basis of an equal distribution of property and association instead of competition in every branch of human industry. Anarchists are those who try to introduce disorder or confusion into a country. Nihilists are extreme Socialists, who desire to destroy every social system that now exists and make way for an entirely new order of things.

AMELIA.—Your woman's rights friend is not right. It might have done her good to have lived in ancient Rome. She would have had—as Fanny Fern used to say, "to walk on a crack" in order to escape being beaten, or perhaps put to death. Her husband would not have stood the slightest nonsense from her, and previous to her marriage her father would have had the authority of life and death over her. Never before, since the world began, have women been so well off, both socially and politically, as they now are.

KANACK.—Every woman is respected in the United States section of America, even by the roughest of men, and nothing strikes the English traveler more than the politeness and deference extended to unprotected girls. 2. With a little capital you would soon find business enough to keep you going; but we should strongly advise you to accept employment in a store. You would be engaged soon enough, for girls with the skill of yourself and your sisters are not by any means plentiful; but remember that you would be obliged to work hard for moderate pay.

GIPSY.—The poor fellow is evidently much in love. We think that you underrate yourself, for your letter is that of a very refined girl. Keep up your correspondence with the youngster, and marry him when he presents himself. If a good farmer's daughter is not good enough for the son of a country incumbent, then we must alter our notions of society. Depend upon it that when the lad expatriated himself for your sake he was in earnest. Had he not been really sincere, he might have amused himself with you merely; as it is, we admire his loyish devotion.

MISERABLE.—We are tolerably certain that you are making your own misery. Your husband acts very kindly in leaving you when you are ill-tempered. Some men would wrangle, but your husband's cool temper enables him to deal with a flighty person of your sort very effectively. How silly you are! You have every comfort, and your partner is industrious, kind, and faithful; yet, merely because he is not a sentimentalist, you talk of going mad. We can imagine how wearisome a querulous, quarrelsome woman like you must be. We cannot spare any pity for you, because you do not know when you are well off; but we certainly pity your husband.

TRICOTRIN.—We have heard of cases in which girls who felt no touch of passion accepted lovers of various ages, and married happily enough. In your case the lady is generous, and you should feel the full beauty of her generosity. She is not quite sure of her own feelings, and she is too fine a nature and too unselfish to commit you. Observe that it is only you of whom she is thinking, not of herself. A man would be very unwise if he relinquished the respectful pursuit of such a girl so long as any hope remained. Give her time; treat her with the same delicacy which she shows towards you, and all will be well. It would be a pity to waste five years so long as a chance remained.

AGES.—The term "Dark Ages" is applied to the centuries which passed after the Roman Empire had finally collapsed and the light of learning was extinct. We cannot of course fix exact dates; for we must always remember that a cultured but effete society flourished in Constantinople at the time when the Turks took it, though the rest of Europe was mainly steeped in ignorance. The Crusading times may most fitly be called "dark," for in those days learning would have died out altogether had not the Saracens and Moors kept the flame alive. With the Renaissance came a revival of Greek and Roman culture, and of all the forms of learning which had been extinguished by the incursion of the barbarians from the North and East. We can hardly rank the century which produced Chaucer so among the "Dark Ages," and therefore we may roughly term the fourteenth, fifteenth, and part of the sixteenth centuries as the Middle Ages.